WILDERNESS PETS AT CAMP BUCKSHAW

EDWARD BRECK

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS.

Archive Collection

This book may not leave the Offices and is borrowed must be returned within 7 days

WILDERNESS PETS
AT
CAMP BUCKSHAW

SUKEY'S BEST PORTRAIT

WILDERNESS PETS AT CAMP BUCKSHAW

BY

EDWARD BRECK
AUTHOR OF "THE WAY OF THE WOODS"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS FROM LIFE

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1910

COPYRIGHT, 1910, BY EDWARD BRECK

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Published April 1910

TO MY MOTHER

PREFACE

THIS is a plain tale of Camp Buckshaw and its wild pets. With a few unimportant exceptions it is also a true tale. The characters are nearly all real persons, though some liberty has been taken with their conversation; and the pets and their deeds are described as accurately as close observation and the use of note-book and camera can insure. Only the episodes of the cubs at Sunday School and of the disagreeable old lady are fictitious, while the sole picture taken from a photograph not made at or near Camp Buckshaw is that of the big moose. This was kindly loaned the author, as his own efforts to secure a good photograph of a bull-moose in hunting time have been in vain.

If the story affords its readers, both young and old, but a small fraction of the delight

conferred by Uncle Ned's pets upon those who were privileged to know them personally, the author will be well content. He wishes it to stand as an inspiration to study nature reverently and at first hand, and a protest against those baneful results of modern civilization, — insensate luxury and false and artificial standards of life.

CONTENTS

I. Mother Bruin's Winter 1

II. A Wildcat Hunt with a Wonderful Sequel 11

III. The Cubs' Early Babyhood 25

IV. The Flying Squirrel 41

V. Lige and Jim 57

VI. Nigghiajootch 81

VII. Nigghy Departs and the Gulls Arrive 103

VIII. Pompey and His Kindred 119

IX. Loons, Frogs, and Beavers 141

X. The Gulls teach Themselves to Fly 161

XI. High Jinks of the Cubs 175

XII. Battle with a Sea-Monster 195

XIII. Calling the Big Bull-Moose . . . 211

XIV. The Snow Begins to Fly 235

ILLUSTRATIONS

Sukey's Best Portrait *Frontispiece*
Sam with a Big Wildcat 20
Skylarking 52
A Double Feed 54
"That for your impudence" 76
Afield with Yankee and the Cubs . . . 90
Taking Nigghy home 106
In the Nest (protective coloring) 110
Tim, Girofla, and Giroflé 116
The Baby Loons 148
Doing a Two-Step 164
Feeding the Gulls 172
Can't see what she finds in that Jug . . 180
Rube Climbing 190
The Big Bull-Moose (Photograph by Geo. D. Pratt) 232
Yankee 238

HALF-TITLES

Mrs. Bruin and the First Snow 1
Range and Loon 11
Jo and Sukey 25
The Flying Squirrel 41

ILLUSTRATIONS

Expressing an Opinion 57
Nigghy Browsing 81
An Argument 103
Pomp and Yank 119
Agamemnon and the Little Loon 141
"Any Fish To-day?" 161
Investigating the Pack-basket 175
The Big Tuna 195
The Call 211
The Tiger of the North Woods 235

(*From photographs by the author*)

MOTHER BRUIN'S WINTER

WILDERNESS PETS AT CAMP BUCKSHAW

CHAPTER I

MOTHER BRUIN'S WINTER

IT was a fine, cold day in early December, and the snow was falling fast, covering the ground and the trees and the frozen brook with shimmering crystals, which gleamed and flashed in the sun's slanting rays like rubies and diamonds. But the old she-bear saw nothing of all this beauty. She had been trying to scratch up fallen beechnuts under the trees, but the snow bothered her grievously at this task, and she sneezed when the fine, hard crystals got into her nose as she rooted for her supper. However, she was not very hungry, for the season had been a generous one, and she was really so fat that she ambled along with difficulty. Her fur, too, was thick

and heavy, and her one thought just now was to find some comfortable place to lie down in. The country all about was strewn with great boulders, across many of which big spruce and hemlock trees had fallen. Over these she clambered heavily, puffing with her exertions, until all at once she found herself in front of a log so high that, instead of climbing over it, she concluded to push her way underneath. So she made a few passes with her great paw at the drifting snow at its foot, when, to her surprise, the snow suddenly caved in, revealing a deep hollow under the log.

"Hello!" thought Mrs. Bruin, "this looks very nice and comfortable to me"; and without further ado she scrambled into the hole, and, as it seemed warm and cosy and protected from the wind and snow, she pawed up the moss, dead brakes, and sticks at the entrance, and just curled up and went to sleep.

All night the snow continued to fall, drift-

ing higher and higher over the log, until all that could be seen was a great white mound.

It would be hard to say what she did in the morning. Perhaps she aroused herself and pushed her head out through the snow-drift, and, finding that the world was cold and white, and the prospect of a breakfast very slim, concluded to stay awhile longer in her new-found home. More likely, however, she was too drowsy for that, and simply did n't wake up at all, for she was very, very sleepy. At all events one thing is certain, that she stayed in that den of hers for weeks and weeks without once going out.

But what did she do for food and drink, you ask. The answer is very simple: she did n't do anything. She merely wintered, or hibernated, as the wise men call it; that is, she passed the whole winter in one long sleep, without food or drink, or even moving, except perhaps to shift a little in a sleepy kind of way. All-wise Nature has arranged this

wintering for bears and some other animals in the far north country, since life in the open in that cold and cheerless season would be too great a hardship, if only because they could not find food enough to satisfy them. All the plants and berries they love to feed on are frozen; the nuts have all been eaten or carried off and hoarded up by the squirrels; the fish they often catch with their paws are protected by the thick ice, or lie in pools so deep that they cannot be reached; and the hares and other wild things have either disappeared or are able to see and keep away from Bruin in the bare winter woods.

It is not only bears that hibernate, but many other creatures, such as woodchucks, skunks, reptiles, and snails. Land reptiles like snakes and toads work themselves down into the earth so deep that the frost cannot touch them; while frogs and turtles sink into the mud at the bottoms of streams and ponds. The land-snail seals himself up tight in his

shell. Snakes frequently snarl themselves up together in great balls, dozens in one bunch, and in this condition are often dug out of caves in a ledge.

A hibernating animal breathes very gently and therefore has a very slow heart-beat, and its temperature sinks almost to that of the surrounding air. As it eats nothing, its digestion practically stops, though in a kind of way it must feed upon its own fat, for at the end of the winter it has lost about one third of its whole weight. It is for this reason that wise Mother Nature sends the bears to bed very fat and with their fur very thick and warm.

Now Mrs. Bruin had a good, long, sound sleep, and never really even half awoke until one morning early in February, when a great wonder took place in the den. Without coming out of her doze, she had an indistinct feeling that something was going to happen, and, almost before she realized it, there were three little bits of quivering

things lying beside her, squeaking to be fed. They were almost naked and barely bigger than rats. In fact they hardly looked like bears at all, but Mrs. Bruin knew at once that they were the cubs she had been expecting before the winter was over, and she let them nurse with all their might. In a very sleepy kind of way she licked them over from time to time, and kept them warmly cuddled up to her ; but most of the time she went right on dozing, for she knew that the tiny cubs would help themselves to milk whenever they wanted it, which was pretty often.

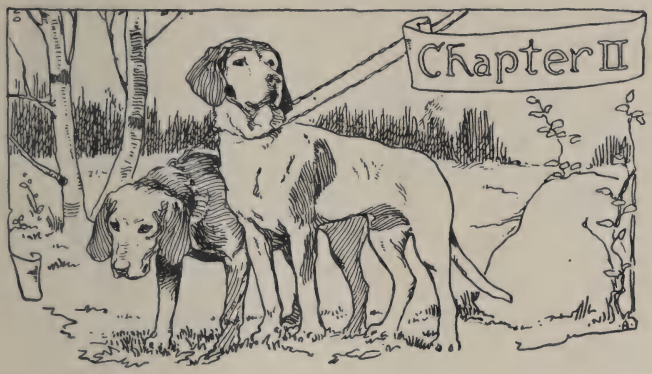
In a few days their fur began to start, and in a fortnight it was quite thick and warm, so that they stopped shivering and devoted themselves entirely to growing, in which effort they were very successful indeed.

It is a curious fact that, in proportion to the great size of the mother, a baby black bear at birth is about the smallest thing in

the animal kingdom. A kitten porcupine is just as large. Of course, the cubs of the grizzly and the great brown Alaska bears are actually somewhat larger.

Our little cubs were over a month old and still had their eyes closed, for what was the good of trying to use them down in that dark den?

And meanwhile Mrs. Bruin dozed on, dreaming perhaps of honeycombs and ants' nests and a nice, fat lamb from the nearest farmer's pasture.



A WILDCAT HUNT WITH A WONDERFUL SEQUEL

CHAPTER II

A WILDCAT HUNT WITH A WONDERFUL SEQUEL

THE sun had not yet risen when Reuben knocked at the door of Uncle Ned Buckshaw's cabin, causing the hounds to give a few growling barks, half suppressed, as if they well knew that such warnings were not needed. As Reuben entered in response to Uncle Ned's cheery "Come in!" Yankee, the cat, rose languidly from the lounge, arched her back, and spread out her claws in one long, luxurious, yawning stretch; after which she jumped down and began to rub up cosily against Reuben's legs, as he stood warming himself in front of the open fire of logs. The dogs, too, would have made up for their barking by a warmer welcome, but they tugged in vain at their chains, and could express their eager joy at the delights of the

chase they felt was in store for them only by whines and snorts and sneezes, while their stout tails beat the table-legs and the floor like cudgels.

The coffee-pot already smoked on the hearth, and the table was laid with bread and butter and smoking oatmeal, with ham and eggs to follow. Loon and old Range, the hounds, got a generous meal of bones and porridge, and Yankee her morning plate of milk, which however she hardly touched, for she had already broken her fast with a nice fat field-mouse that had gone afield altogether too early for a cold winter's morning.

The two men, Uncle Ned small, alert, and wiry, and Reuben big and broad-shouldered, rose from their hearty meal, put on their caps and gloves, took their guns from the wall, and released the dogs from their chains, keeping fast hold of them, however, by means of short leashes. So eager were the good doggies for the hunt that they fairly

dragged their masters along over the light snow, nervously snuffing at every track, even that of a hare.

The men started with a very stern purpose, for a few days before no fewer than six sheep had been killed on a neighbor's farm by a big wildcat, and Uncle Ned and Reuben had been entrusted with the punishment of the assassin. The track of the big cat led from the pasture back into the woods over a hardwood ridge some three miles off, and thither the avengers pursued their way, through frozen swales and over rough, boulder-strewn barrens.

But all at once old Range raised his head and gave tongue to a most melancholy howl, followed by the telltale "Ow! Ow!" which showed plainly that he scented something of importance. The younger hound, Loon, listened and sniffed for a moment, and then began to strain eagerly at his chain and to join in the merry melody. No tracks were as yet

to be seen, but the hunters knew that something was in the wind, and allowed the hounds to drag them along at a double-quick. And sure enough, just at the top of a little knoll was an enormous wildcat track that could not have been made longer than a few hours before. There was no holding the dogs now. Indeed, they tugged and struggled so in their excitement that it was all their masters could do to unchain them, when they bounded off on the fresh trail, their noses to the ground, making the frosty morning air ring with their deep-toned baying.

The knoll where the dogs had been released commanded the country for a good distance on every side, and so the hunters made themselves as comfortable as possible and awaited developments. To try to follow the hounds would probably have resulted in a deal of hard tramping for nothing, for usually there is no telling in which direction a wildcat will run when pursued, and the

chase may last half a day, or even longer. But this time the huntsmen were in luck, for the dogs were fresh and the cat had but a short start of them. At first the baying sounded farther and farther away, until it was scarcely audible, only to resound suddenly once more on a hillside not half a mile to the east. It soon resolved itself into a steady but furious "Ow! Ow! Ow!"

"Treed!" cried Reuben, and with one accord the two started at a breakneck pace in the direction of the baying. It would have taken the best of woodsmen to keep up with them, scaling lofty windfalls, forcing themselves through thick copses of scrub-spruces and thorns, and sliding down the slippery sides of huge boulders. Here and there the snow lay in great drifts, but in most places it was not over a few inches deep, so that the hunters were not much impeded by it, though it served to mask many a treacherous pitfall. No accident happened however until, in scal-

ing a big log banked by snow-drifts, Reuben's weight proved too much, and his left leg sank into the snow up to his middle. At the same moment he thought he heard a faint squeal and felt something wriggle under his foot.

"Great Jehosaphat!" he yelled, struggling to free his imprisoned leg. "Hi, gimme a hand! I 'm in a bear-den!"

Mr. Buckshaw could not help laughing at his friend's panic, but he nevertheless braced himself as well as he could, and got a good hold of Reuben, who managed with difficulty to flounder out of the deep drift.

"You don't believe it, eh?" asked Reuben indignantly. "Jest put your ear down to that thar hole!"

Uncle Ned did so, and sure enough, he distinctly heard a plaintive squealing away down in the snowy depths below. This pleased him mightily, for he had already made up his mind to capture a litter of cubs that spring for the boys to play with.

Being careful not to disturb the den further, they marked the spot by bending down the tops of a couple of young evergreens near by, and proceeded on their way to join the hounds.

When, all breathless, they finally arrived on the spot, sure enough, there was puss, and a big one it certainly was, sitting with arched back on the top of a tall stump, just out of reach of the dogs, who were jumping about in great excitement, their manes raised and their ears laid back in fury. Every time one of the dogs made a jump, puss would swell up and strike like lightning with her powerful paws, or rather *his*, for it was a big tomcat. The muzzles of both the dogs were bleeding, showing that they had already paid for their rashness. If Tom had been on the ground the fight would not have lasted long; but he had all the advantage of position, and might have held out for a considerable time if the enemy had not received reinforcements. But

at sight of his dreaded human foes he recognized that a stump, be it ever so high, was no proper refuge from man, and, with one tremendous jump, he cleared the dogs and bounded off into the woods once more. Like race-horses the hounds were after him, and the men followed as best they could.

The chase now led toward the shores of a small lake, which, usually snow-covered, would afford puss good footing; but this time the luck was against him, for a recent gale had left large patches of glare ice here and there, upon which the cat floundered as badly as the hounds, especially as he was badly winded, having been on his feet nearly all night, not to speak of the present race. Just as the men reached the shore of the lake, the hounds caught up with the cat out near the middle of the ice, and there followed a lively mix-up without any delay. Time and again one dog or the other would rush in upon what seemed to be a buzz-saw of claws and

SAM WITH A BIG WILDCAT

teeth, only to recoil with bleeding chops and nose. Had they been puppies, they would probably have rushed in and seized the wildcat without hesitation and very likely have paid a severe penalty for their rashness; but they now preferred to worry Tom and try to catch him off his guard. Nevertheless, at the encouraging shouts of their masters their blood rose to fighting heat, and both at once made a dash for their enemy, who was soon stretched out on the ice with a gaping wound in his throat, while the hounds set to work to lick their ugly cuts. Many old woodsmen will tell you that wildcats are cowardly animals, and no doubt they will rather run than fight; but when cornered they will defend themselves like demons, especially the old toms. There is, however, no true record of their actually attacking a man, in spite of the tales that are told round the camp-fire of a winter's evening.

Uncle Ned slung the cat over his shoulder,

and the men started for home, the dogs meekly following.

"No more mutton for you, my dear!" said Uncle Ned, patting pussy's tawny sides. "Now we 'll have a bite to eat and come back after those little bears. You can crawl into that hole of yours and investigate, Reuben. If the old bear says anything, tell her you lost your way and got the wrong house!"

After a good dinner at Ned's cabin the men refilled their pipes and started back to the bear-den. They left the dogs at home this time, but took their rifles. Ned slung an empty pack-basket on his back and Reuben shouldered an axe. Arrived at the place, they found everything calm and peaceful, though a faint squeal could be heard now and then from the depths. The men began to clear away the snow as quickly as possible, making little disturbance, and being careful to have their rifles handy in case Mrs. Bruin should wake up suddenly and wish to in-

quire about their intentions. And it was n't long before she did wake up, for a savage growl drowned the chorus of squeaks and squeals under the log, and the next moment a big brown head, with little bloodshot eyes blinking in the unwonted light, was thrust through the snow. The two men jumped back at the sight and grabbed their rifles. For a moment the old she-bear stared at them in apparent astonishment, and then began to make violent attempts to burst through the snow, growling terribly. In a second she had shaken the snow from her and stood there with her full bulk, tall, lank, and savage. But before she could make the rush that her half-dazed brain was contemplating, a couple of rifle-balls pierced her brain and neck, and she sank down lifeless on the snow. Poor old lady, she died bravely defending her little ones.

"More mutton saved!" murmured Reuben, as he knelt by the den and reached down

into it. The next moment he brought to light a little brown-black ball of fur that gave vent to a series of howls and squeals that could have been heard for miles. Another dig down into the hole and a second one appeared, and then a third. Their eyes were still closed, but their mouths were very much open, and of the excellent quality of their lungs there was not a question.

Uncle Ned wrapped the squalling infants in a big sheepskin and put them in his pack-basket, after which the old bear was skinned and cut up. A bundle for Reuben was made of the skin and the best parts of the meat, and they returned in triumph to Camp Buckshaw with their curious and precious booty.

THE CUBS' EARLY BABYHOOD

CHAPTER III

THE CUBS' EARLY BABYHOOD

FIRST seeing to it that the hounds were secure in their own quarters, Uncle Ned placed the pack-basket on the cabin floor and upset it. In a jiffy out crawled the lively little balls of fur, with such a chorus of yelling and whining and screaming and growling that the men had to hold their ears, while the dogs bayed loudly in protest from the shed. Yankee, the cat, was the most surprised and disgusted of all the household. She scrambled up on the sofa, and regarded the screaming, crawling little objects on the floor with arched back and saucer eyes. Perhaps some inborn instinct of hatred for the bear race was aroused in her.

It was Uncle Ned's intention to take a photograph of the cubs; but the trouble was

to get them to stay together for even a few seconds, as they started off at once for three different corners of the cabin, and by the time two of them had been placed in the middle of the floor on a shawl, the third was almost in the fireplace. Finally they were taken outside upon the snow, where Mr. Cushing, Reuben's father, offered to hold them together long enough for the camera to snap. And so their first baby picture was taken. Uncle Ned then proceeded to measure and weigh them, as he said their "vital statistics" were important. But first of all it was necessary to name them, and, after due deliberation, he called the biggest one, a male, Reuben, after the friend who had discovered them. The larger female was christened Sukey, which Mr. Buckshaw said was as far from "hifalutin" classic names as could be, while the little one he called Connie, after one of his "nieces," for it must be explained here that Uncle promoted any

young lady for whom he took a liking to be his "niece."

Poor little Connie was the runt of the litter, and was bullied terribly by her bigger brother and sister from the very first. Reuben was the biggest and the blackest. The last of March, when he was about six weeks old, he weighed five and one half pounds, and measured fourteen inches from the tip of his nose to that of his funny little tail. His sisters were a little smaller and lighter, and their color was more brownish than his. Each of the three had a voice that could easily be distinguished from the others, but Rube's was the loudest. It would be hard to describe it, but it sounded most like that of a three-year-old child screaming in an agony of mortal terror. The voices of the others were pitched rather higher, and bore resemblance to a whole barnyard of animals and birds, especially to an old mother-hen when she is taken off her eggs; though Mr. Cush-

ing insisted that a frightened pig was more like it.

The little rascals were put in a big wooden box, and Uncle Ned mixed some warm milk and water, which he put in a bottle with a baby's nipple borrowed of a neighbor's wife, and with this he fed the cubs one by one. The noise the others made during this operation was ear-splitting, and even the feeding one would grunt and growl as it sucked, so that it often got only half the milk, the rest running down all over it. In fact, the table manners of those cubs were shocking. Every three hours they had to be fed, and if Uncle Ned waited any longer than that, they left him in no doubt as to their opinion on the subject. When they were on the floor they made for anybody in the room, and crawled up his legs to get at the bottle. Their claws were sharp as needles and their teeth likewise, so that Uncle Ned soon found that thick gloves were a necessity for a "bear-father."

The weather was too cold for them to sleep in the new bear-house that Uncle Ned had made, with the help of his friend, Charlie Munro, so they were kept in the box, with big weights on the cover, as they were so strong that they would otherwise have forced it off and in all probability marched straight into the open fire; for the fire's fascination for them was a very strange thing. It probably seemed warm and comfortable to them, and they therefore tried to get as near it as possible. After Uncle Ned had caught Sukey by the neck just as she was about to walk right into the live coals, he concluded to cover the whole fireplace with a wire screen. When this was up they would get as close to it as they could and go to sleep there. During the daytime, if the weather was not too cold, they were allowed to run about outdoors, where they would curl up in the sun. The hounds could not understand why they were not allowed to make a meal of them,

and it took several good beatings before they could be taught to let the bears alone. Even then Uncle Ned was careful to tether the dogs when the cubs were at large, for it was certainly expecting a good deal to ask a bear-hound to exercise so much self-control.

From the first Mr. Buckshaw had fears for little Connie, for she was so much weaker than the others that they used her merely as a mat to lie on, and in their rough play she got many blows that were much too hard for her frail little body. Her squeaky voice got weaker and weaker, and on the third morning Uncle Ned found the two bigger cubs lying on her. He lifted her out of the box, but she could hardly give out a plaintive bleat, and she refused to suck the bottle long, but just shivered and sighed. Ned's heart was heavy, for he well knew that her hours were numbered. He carried her round nearly all day inside of his woolen shirt,

where it was warm, and fed her a little as often as she would swallow; but toward night her sighs began to come quicker and her head to droop, and with moist eyes he laid her down in front of the fire on a soft sheepskin. There, as the sun flooded the frozen lake with gorgeous color, little Connie's bear-soul departed to the best place bears can go to. Who shall say where it is? What narrow and uncharitable human being will deny that innocent little thing what he would grant to a sin-laden man?

But Rube and Sukey mourned not for their little sister. They fought each other savagely when Uncle Ned came with the bottle, and they played almost as roughly when they were satisfied, rolling about and cuffing each other on the cabin floor.

Next day Uncle Ned set himself the sad task of preparing Connie's skin and skeleton to be mounted, and then packed them up and sent them to the great American Museum

in New York. So at any rate the poor little bear rests now in a gorgeous sepulchre.

Her brother and sister grew rapidly, but Sukey soon became the bigger and stronger, for Rube was very greedy, and ate so fast and so piggishly that he filled his little stomach up with gas, so that he often resembled a football made out of fur. Uncle Ned was frightened and had to give him medicine. He seemed to have bad attacks of indigestion, and behaved for all the world like a little baby. One of his eyes showed a little sore, which made Uncle Ned so uneasy that he wrote to an acquaintance of his in New York, who is at the head of the great Bronx Zoölogical Park, for advice, and Dr. Hornaday replied to the anxious "bear-father" that Rube only had a case of chronic gastritis, and ought to be fed on peptonized milk and treated very carefully. Dr. Hornaday said that many of the little bears in the Zoo were attacked with the same malady, but

that it was not dangerous. So Rube had to be "peptonized" for a month or so until he got well. But he never caught up to Sukey in bulk or strength or sprightliness. She was always the ringleader in all mischief, and she bullied Rube grievously.

When they had been at Camp Buckshaw about a month, Yankee proudly presented her master with four lovely little kittens, which were put in a box of their own, next that of the bears, for Uncle Ned wished all his pets to grow up in amity. But, alas for his good intentions, Yankee's distrust of the cubs changed, upon the arrival of the kittens, into positive hatred, and she flew savagely at either of them that came near her little ones. Finally one afternoon Uncle Ned returned from the woods to find all the kittens gone and Yankee in a state of great excitement, meowing piteously and trying to lead him in the direction of the village hotel. Following her, he came upon one of

the kits crawling blindly about the hotel veranda, and carried it back to the cabin. The other three were nowhere to be found, though it was evident by Yank's actions that they were in or about the hotel. That very night Yankee again carried off the fourth kit, and Uncle Ned now made up his mind to find out where she had hidden them. After two hours of coaxing and watching and listening, Yankee meowing the whole time, as if to say, "I 'm not quite satisfied with things, but I won't have my kittens near those awful bears any longer!" Uncle Ned heard a faint mew in one of the empty rooms, and there, way underneath the slats and springs of a folding-bed, were those kits! The bed had to be taken apart before they could be got out, and poor Yankee was obliged to follow disconsolately after Uncle Ned, as he carried them all back to the cabin and placed them once more in their old box.

Wise Yankee's fears but too surely foreshadowed a terrible tragedy, which it is very sad to tell about; but this is a true story and everything that those bad little bears did must be put on record. It was not long before they found out that the four kittens, Hænsel, Gretl, Tom, and Eddie, formed the warmest and most comfortable rug to lie on, and the moment Yankee would leave the box and go off hunting, one or both of the cubs jumped into the kittens' box in a trice. The first time they did this Yankee came home and found them there, and the result was a terrible clawing that left them with bleeding noses and torn ears. But they persisted in their naughty ways, until one day Uncle Ned found them again in the box with the kittens. He lifted them out and cuffed their ears well for them; but, sorrowful to say, poor little Tom had been smothered to death; and not only that, but they had even tried to eat up the little kitten!

Uncle Ned waited no longer, but banished them to the bear-house, for such murderous ways were not to be tolerated. From that moment Yankee seemed to know well that the cubs were not allowed inside the cabin, and the instant Sukey or Reuben poked their noses through the door she was after them like a spring-trap. As a rule they would try to run by her and hide in some safe place until her anger had subsided, for well they knew that all the nicest things, such as milk-pans, jam-pots, and the molasses-jug, were in the cabin; and woe to such things if they were not discovered in their hiding, for in a few weeks they learned to climb upon the tables and shelves, and if there is any beast in the world that can knock over dishes in record time, it is a healthy bear-cub.

But when they were good they were certainly very good indeed, and in the evening, after a good feed of warm milk and water, mixed with a little molasses, and, later, oat-

meal gruel, they would climb up on to Uncle Ned's lap as he read by the fire, and go to sleep in perfect contentment. By the first of June Sukey weighed fourteen and a half pounds, while Rube scaled a pound less.

THE FLYING SQUIRREL

CHAPTER IV

THE FLYING SQUIRREL

IT was early in May when a friend of Mr. Buckshaw's, Mr. Darrach, returned from a week's trouting with Louis Harlow, the great Indian hunter of the neighborhood. Well knowing Ned's love of wild pets, Mr. Darrach had captured and brought to Camp Buckshaw, as a present for its master, a flying squirrel and three young ones. Happening to come upon a big hollow tree in the deep forest, they saw the little mother run out of a hole in response to their rapping, and disappear through the air toward another tree, with the bold, sweeping leap peculiar to this little animal. Toward evening, after returning to camp, they easily caught the mother squirrel by holding a landing-net over the hole in the

tree, and then proceeded to dig out the whole nest with the young in it.

Though he did not say so, Uncle Ned was more sad than glad when he received this beautiful and interesting present, for he knew well that, after being thus torn away from her natural surroundings at this critical period of her family life, the little beast was doomed, together with her fluffy brood. Nevertheless, he made a cage out of a large packing-box, with an inclined plane leading up to a smaller box in an upper corner, where he placed the nest. This was a rather elaborately made affair of grasses woven into the form of a deep pocket, very much like that of the Baltimore oriole, though larger and stronger. As is usually the case with flying squirrels, this one turned out to be a failure from an exhibition point of view, for it kept quietly hidden in its nest all day, only venturing out at night; though when the cage was disturbed, it would thrust its lovely little head out of the nest-

hole and take an observation with its great black eyes. Though well supplied with nuts, both shelled and unshelled, the mother ate but very few of them, and in a day or two Uncle Ned discovered the horrible cause of this apparent fasting, for he found on the floor of the cage a tiny piece of bloody fur, and, upon investigating the nest, he was shocked to see that only one of the three kittens remained in it, the mother having devoured the other two! The third young one was dead, and Mr. Buckshaw lost no time in setting the poor little demented mother at liberty, hoping that at least her life would not be forfeited.

Shall we call her unnatural? It seems a hard word for her act, since it was man who tore her from her really natural home and surroundings, and placed her, a creature of most high-strung nerves, in an environment where she was doomed to something akin to hysteria. The naturalists will tell us

that many animals devour their young under such circumstances, particularly the larger members of the cat family; though in such cases it is generally the male that eats up his progeny, for which reason the mother seeks to hide them from him.

Ned was unhappy at his loss, though he knew it was surely coming. The flying squirrel is the prettiest of its kind, with the softest of brownish-gray and white fur and its side-folds of skin that operate like parachutes when spread out in flight. It is the real model of the "heavier than air" flying machine, but its ability to fly has remained the same, about where the inventors Langley and Lilienthal left the modern flying-machine; that is, it can glide through the air downwards after its leap, though, just before alighting, it is able to curve upwards the slightest bit. As Uncle Ned already knew, it is a nocturnal animal, which makes it an uninteresting pet by daylight. His experience with squirrels had been

a long one, but, in spite of his endeavors to make his pets live in complete amity, he did not attempt to bend nature too much to his will, for Yankee, that marvel of all cats, could not be persuaded to give up her hereditary appetite for squirrels and mice, though she knew too much to take birds under her master's nose. In her youth she had brought to the cabin a young goldfinch, and on another occasion a baby grouse, both quite uninjured, so that Uncle Ned was able to restore them to their mothers. Nevertheless he gave Yank a severe whipping after each adventure, and he fondly hoped that her intelligence would lead her to understand that bird-meat was not tolerated at Camp Buckshaw. Like most of us, Uncle Ned was human, and, while declaring against the race of cats for their bird-killing habits, he made an exception of his beloved Yank.

About this time two big buckboards full of Uncle Ned's "nieces" and "nephews"

arrived from town to spend the summer. There were the girls, lots of them, ranging from grown-ups down to ten-year-olds. There was Vic the bold, with a sense of monopoly, especially in regard to young men, — clever, bright, and heartless, — whom everybody liked and nobody trusted, — the arch-flirt and always the "good fellow." There was Lucy the studious, the good; and the sisters, Nell and Madge, — "Calamity Mag" Uncle Ned called her in fun, because something was always happening to her. Then came Jo and Edith, school friends, quaint little folk, with old-fashioned ways and ideas. The two boys, Alan and Jack, were stocky, enthusiastic youngsters, and always ready for an adventure.

Not one of the party that had not made good progress in the school of the woods, and could cast a fly, paddle a canoe, and swim like a fish. It was a wonder to see slim Vic with a canoe on her shoulders, or Nell

diving gracefully from a high rock into the lake. There was no fear of getting crow's-feet or rough hands. Large feet and waists had no terrors. Costumes of khaki and dux-bak, with short skirts and comfortable boots or moccasins, were always worn by Uncle Ned's young folks, and they had already learned to take even a spill in the lake as a matter of course, a part of the fascinating game of the woods.

Vic and Jack, as native Bluenoses, were already good fly-fishermen, while some of the others were eager pupils in the gentle art. The outfit was all that could be desired, even by such a stickler for the correct thing in angling as Uncle Ned, whose word had been heeded in the purchasing. The rods were light but stronger than steel for this purpose, the lines supple, the reels simple, and the flies small. Every one had to pass through the veteran's school of fly-casting, holding a stick under the arm without drop-

ping it, while the rod went back, paused an instant, and then swept forward to the commands of "Back! Pause! Forward!"

Mr. Cushing, who remained behind to keep camp and be bear-father in Uncle Ned's stead, took Rube and Sukey down to the dock to see the departure of the canoe-flotilla. When left to themselves they loved to paddle in the cold water, and would even wade out nearly over their own heads; but they much resented being pushed in. Uncle Ned determined to give them their first good lesson in swimming, and for this purpose he took them out some thirty or forty yards from the shore in his canoe, and unceremoniously tossed them overboard, their heart-broken howling and screaming being downed by their dive into the lake. As they came to the surface, puffing like small steam-engines, they took no notice of the canoes, but swam directly to a flat rock a few yards from the dock, where they perched disconsolately.

A little coaxing by Mr. Cushing was enough to make the bold Sukey plunge in again of her own accord and swim to the dock; but the coward Rube remained marooned, and howled dismally at being thus abandoned. There was nothing to be done but go out in a canoe and poke him off the rock; whereupon he promptly swam ashore, clambered up on the dock, and shook himself joyfully. After a swim, as after feeding, the cubs were full of fun and would chase each other all over the place, a favorite sport being climbing trees and stumps and trying to push each other off. The lower one would bite the legs of the higher, and it was a conclusive proof of their sureness of foot that, in spite of most astonishing skylarking, they never had a bad fall. When they got tired out they would frequently climb up a certain slender hackmatack tree alongside the cabin, curl up on a limb, and peacefully go to sleep, swaying in the breeze.

By this time they lived entirely in their own big house, built against one side of which was an extensive run or yard, entirely covered in with strong wire netting, for the little beggars had powerful claws, and much resented being fastened in for the night. Sukey especially was an adept at finding a weak place in the netting or digging out underneath, and it was weeks before every possible avenue of escape was shut off, and Uncle Ned fairly sure that he need not close his own house up tight for fear of finding it the scene of wreck and ruin on his return. Later on you shall learn what a consummate instrument of destruction Sukey was.

It was not until they were about four months old that they began gradually to abandon their diet of warm milk thickened slightly with oatmeal gruel and sweetened with molasses. Uncle Ned tempted them from time to time with such delicacies as bits of cooked meat and fruit; but, apart

SKYLARKING

from Sukey's terrible lapse into utter barbarism when she tried to eat up the newborn kitten, the first novelty indulged in took the form of raw trout, small pieces of which they ate sparingly. In a week or two their appetite for this dainty became fixed, and it was soon followed by many other kinds of food, especially berries. Meat they never would touch so long as they remained with Uncle Ned. A month or so later, when the blueberries came, they were in their element, and nothing pleased them so much as to be taken to walk in a "blueberry-patch." It required force to make them stop feasting and follow their master home, and frequently Sukey would slyly verge to one side of the trail and return to the beloved field.

When they were feeding it was always necessary to handle the cubs with great care, as they were irritable and very apt to bite savagely, not from viciousness, but from the old inborn instinct of self-preservation. When

they were four months old it was impossible to feed one alone with any comfort while the other was by; for the neglected one would fly into a perfect rage, rush at the legs of its master, swarm up, grab and bite its fellow's hind legs, shaking them savagely and fairly shrieking with fury. For this reason Uncle Ned usually fed them together, using two bottles, or was careful to secure one while feeding the other. Sukey soon learned to eat from a plate, but this had to be fastened to the ground or floor, as her table manners were outrageous. She got as much of her little person into the plate as she could, and sucked up her food with a noise worthy of a pig, accompanying herself the while with grunts and warning growls. Rube hardly dared to approach the plate, as she would snap at him, and, if this failed to drive him off, would rush at him with a suddenness and frenzy that sent him scurrying into a corner, whence he viewed her return to her

A DOUBLE FEED

plate with frightened envy, giving out plaintive little whines.

And yet this same savage Sukey, once her little "tummy" was comfortably full, became the sweetest, most docile little bear in the world, and would look up at you with her wicked little bloodshot eyes with a most trusting expression, and allow you to fondle her at will. When in this state she would lie cuddled up in Uncle Ned's arms, or even with her paws lovingly placed round his neck, for an hour. Rube, probably because of his sore head, could not be trusted in this manner, and Uncle Ned had many severe bites in his chin and neck and hands to show for his endeavors to subject poor Rube to a discipline of love. Both bears were fond of their master and would tolerate a few of his friends; but the appearance of a strange face would send them off like a flash under the bear-house, where they would remain for a long time after the intruder had disappeared.

LIGE AND JIM

CHAPTER V

LIGE AND JIM

AS the canoes made their way down the lakes and through Pike's and Eleven-Mile "runs" toward the log-cabin on the Big River, the young people had many chances to display their knowledge of birds.

"Is that an eagle, Uncle Ned?" queried Madge, as a large bird with snow-white breast and dark wings circled high overhead.

When they heard that it was a sea-gull, great surprise was expressed that a gull should wander so far from the sea. But Uncle Ned promised to show them before many days why the gulls flew so far inland, to the sweet-water lakes. Soon afterwards a flock of crows flew over and settled in a grove not far from the shore, one big fellow

remaining perched on the topmost branch of a tall spruce as a sentinel. On the other side of the lake, which narrowed at this point, some peculiar, crowlike sounds were heard, and one of the boys remarked that the crows had left some of their company behind when they flew.

"That 's a funny caw," said Alan. "I could do better myself."

"Why, what 's the matter with it, Alan?" asked Uncle Ned.

"Oh, it 's too squawky and flat, more like a meow," said Alan.

"Well," answered Uncle Ned, "you can't expect a good caw from a raven, can you? At all events, not a crow-language caw?"

Everybody became quite excited when Uncle Ned explained that the raven was nearly half as big again as a crow, and that there were lots of nests where they were going, and promised them a raven-hunt before they returned. "They are great talk-

ers," he went on; "better than crows, though their voices are not so full, but more like a boy's when it begins to break. Sometimes it sounds just like a human voice. I remember once when I was fishin' with Charlie Charlton and we got separated on the river. Pretty soon I heard Charlie call out 'Doctor!' That's what he generally calls me. 'Hello!' says I. 'Doctor!' he called again in a few seconds. 'Hello yourself; what do you want?' says I again. 'Doctor!' it came for the third and fourth time. Then I got mad, and fairly yelled at him: 'What the holy cats do you want, anyway, yellin' like that? If you want to see me, come over here!' I thought it was funny that a raven flew out of a big tree not far away; and when I got to camp I found Charlie there quietly cookin' dinner, an' he swore he'd been round for half an hour and did n't know anything about anybody callin' me. Then I knew it was one o' those black boys, and Charlie never let me

forget that I was fooled by a raven. But you can often hear 'em callin' 'Doctor!' when there's a lot of 'em together and they're conversin'."

Del Thomas's Big River Camp was in a beautiful grove of giant hemlocks left standing by the lumbermen, not because of any love for nature but because the more valuable pines and spruces were all they could handle at that time. Not far away roared and rushed the river, at this time of year a real torrent, and full of fine trout. At the very landing-place of the canoes the boys had captured several good ones, hooking, playing, and netting them in veteran style; but they hardly waited to get their packs into camp before rushing off for a celebrated pool somewhat lower down, where at least one tremendous trout was pretty sure to be found. The river narrowed here to a plunge of a rod's height and width, and seethed and swirled away amid forbidding rocks that just

showed their ugly heads above the foam, to where the pool shallowed over the white sand fifty yards below. On either side were immense boulders, and on these our heroes took their stand, well apart from one another, and cast their flies on the troubled waters.

Jack had been here before and pinned his faith to a big silver-doctor with a Montreal as a dropper, while Alan was more classic, and used a cast of small flies, an oak and a coachman. It was he who got the first good rise, about in the middle of the pool; but the trout, evidently a big one, failed to hook itself. The tremendous splash it made served, however, to rouse the excitement of the young anglers, and their hearts beat against their ribs like hammers. Soon more rises came, or rather strikes, for in such tumultuous water the fish had to make rapid plunges upward to reach the flies, which, unlike the natural insects, remained bobbing

on the surface or were even dragged up-stream against the current. No wonder the trout struck short. Several good ones were brought to net, however, but nothing of any great size, when all at once the big one came again, this time to the silver-doctor.

"I've got him!" yelled Jack. But no, the fish, leaping clear of the pink foam, like a porpoise, had missed the fly. Again and again Jack cast with beating heart, and he was almost despairing, when once more came that upward dart and porpoise-jump, and the big trout landed squarely on the fly. The next second Jack's reel screamed, as the fish, feeling the hook, dashed down-stream like mad.

Alan, like a good sportsman, though envious of his friend, pulled in his line and stood by with the long-handled landing net, for it was evident that a savage fight would be necessary before "Jumbo," as the fish had been named before he had even shown himself, could be landed. This way and that, up-

stream and down, the big fish would dart, and then sulk for a while deep down in the water. Jack kept a taut line on him, for he had chosen the strongest tackle especially for "Jumbo's" benefit; and he was beginning to feel sure of his prize when Alan exclaimed: —

"Look out for that snag! He 's working over to it!"

Too late! The half-sunken log had its submerged end farther up-stream, and before Jack could check the fish, it had taken the fatal coil round the log and was fast. What a situation! There was the trout, three pounds if an ounce, tightly hitched far down in those swirling waters. Jack pulled as hard as he dared, but in vain, and he stood there with bent rod, the picture of rage and grief. It was too far from the shore to reach with the net or even with a pole, and wading was out of the question. Nor could a canoe live in those rapids, even if one had been there.

Suddenly Jack laid the rod down so that the line would remain taut, and hastily pulled off his waistcoat.

"What you going to do?" asked Alan anxiously.

"I'm goin' to have that trout!" answered Jack. And the next moment he had let himself down carefully into the dashing waters, and was working down-stream, half swimming and half fending off the rocks with hands and feet.

Alan was terrified, for it seemed impossible to make way through that swift, rock-filled torrent without being dashed to pieces and drowned. But Jack struck a submerged rock but once, and in his excitement hardly noticed the nasty scrape that took six inches of skin off his leg and left him lame for a week. Before you could count ten he was abreast of the log. Then with a plunge he caught its end as he swept by, and the next moment bestrode it in triumph.

"I see him! I see him!" he cried, as he gazed into the water. "Chuck me the net! He's wound the leader round and round the log!"

A clever throw and a good catch put the net in Jack's hands, and, reaching down carefully and awaiting his chance, he at last scooped up the big fish with a yell of triumph. In his excitement he fairly hugged the netted fish to his bosom, and then plunged once more into the pool. Below the log the water proved to be less deep and the bottom sandy, so that he was soon ashore with his trophy of yellow and red. Without stopping to get their rods, the boys rushed off to camp, where they enjoyed a triumph that was worthy of the great trout. Just what Jumbo weighed is not on record, but he certainly was what Alan called him — a "sockdologer!"

It was not long before the catch was in process of cooking for the noon meal, each

of the party having the privilege of choosing his own method. Several preferred the trout fried, and these were done on the stove in the cabin. The big girls cut slender sticks of birch and roasted their trout over the fine hardwood fire in the open, which was now a bed of glowing coals. Alan and Jack, however, resolved that no less complicated a process than steaming was good enough for Jumbo, and the great fish was prepared for the sacrifice with due care and solemnity. First he was dressed, but head, tail, and fins were left on. Then a piece of bacon was laid inside of him and salt sprinkled all over him. Then he was wrapped in a piece of waxpaper, and, over that, several layers of big leaves with an old newspaper outside. The whole bundle was then thoroughly doused in water until it was dripping wet, and laid in a little hole scooped out of the coals in the middle of the open fire, the coals being raked over it. Alan and Jack then sat

round the fire awaiting the right moment to dig up the precious bundle; for a few minutes too long and the fish would be burned.

The others were already at table enjoying their dinner before the boys concluded to excavate Jumbo, and many were the gibes and derisive giggles when the misshapen, blackened, and smoking object was raked out of the coals. The lads seemed somewhat taken aback at its disreputable appearance, but set to work to free the fish from its unsightly covering. The appearance of the tail which, half burned, fell off first, was the signal for more ridicule on the part of the girls; but presently a most savory odor began to make itself known, and soon the great fish, minus the head and tail, was lying on a platter, its pink flesh smoking hot and done to a turn. And how the boys enjoyed their triumph as they made way with the juicy dainty! The girls were too proud to taste it, but Uncle

Ned took a piece and pronounced it a wonder of camp-cooking.

During dinner, as the midday meal is called in the woods, there were croakings and cawings in the trees above the party, and Jack insisted that the ravens were calling for the "Doctor"! A nest had been discovered by Uncle Ned not far from the camp, in a tall hemlock, about sixty feet from the ground, and both Alan and Jack were eager for the climb. Uncle Ned decided in favor of Alan, who had been several times on sailing cruises and was a good climber. Adjusting the climbing-irons, the lad swarmed up the big tree, the angry squawking of the ravens proving the presence of the young in the nest. Presently Alan poked his head up over the edge of the bundle of sticks and called out joyfully: —

"Two of 'em! Shall I take both?"

"Sure!" replied Uncle Ned from below. "Wrap 'em up in your coat and drop 'em!"

This was done, and in a moment down came the flying bundle. Unfortunately it came undone, and one of the little ones got quite a nasty fall, while the other landed on the soft moss and dead leaves and pins. This one was nearly twice as big as his brother and probably a week or more older. The little fellow moped, and it was a few hours before he quite revived. Such a squawking and hoarse squeaking as they gave voice to, and such a capacity for bits of fish as they had! Alan brought down from the nest a collection of bones and feathers which proved to be the remains of young hares and birds; and there was also some wool, which Uncle Ned examined curiously.

"Hm!" he mused. "If that 's lamb's wool they must have gone quite a ways for it."

"Lamb's wool!" exclaimed Nell. "Do ravens kill lambs?"

"They 've certainly got the name for it

round these parts. They often use wool for their nests, but it certainly looks bad, very suspicious."

The stretch of mouth exhibited by the little chaps when they cried for food was marvelous. You could see right down to their lungs, as Jack said. Uncle Ned pointed out to the young folks the interesting structure of the birds' tongues, with their peculiar claw-like ridges at the base, the claws being pointed down the throat, so that the food taken by the birds will catch on the fleshy points and be drawn into the gullet.

"They 're not very black," observed Madge. "People always say 'as black as a raven.' These are as much gray as black."

"Just give 'em time, Madge," said Uncle Ned. "They 'll turn black enough by-and-by, — a blue-black, deeper than a crow. Now boys, what shall we call 'em?"

Jack voted for Elijah, while Alan, who was taking Roman History at school, sug-

gested Nero for the little fellow; though Nell insisted that Squawky Senior and Squawky Junior would be the only proper names for them. Her proposal was ignored.

That evening Lige and Nero were introduced to the other pets at Camp Buckshaw, where they were received with complete indifference by Sukey and Rube, and with contempt by Yankee, — a feeling amply repaid later by pure hostility on the part of Elijah, who was soon left alone by poor Nero; for his sixty-foot jump proved too much for him, and he flew back to Valhalla, where no doubt he helps guard the portal of Woden. In plain English, Nero died, and was buried with due solemnity under the red thorn-tree that Uncle Ned always associated with all dead hopes.

But all Nero's lost vitality seemed to pass into the body of his brother, for Lige waxed strong and beautiful, and in less than three weeks began to show the lustrous sheen of

blue-black that Madge had missed from his youthful plumage. At first he was kept in a box at night, but soon Uncle Ned allowed him to shift for himself, and he chose the peak of the wood-house roof, which was sheltered by the cabin roof from the prevailing lake winds. Hither he repaired only when he was ready for bed, for by day he was here, there, and everywhere, his favorite station being on the top of a big boulder which got to be called the "raven's rock." He was very sociably inclined, and would follow the bears round, talking to them and scolding them as if they were masters of the raven language. When the bears were fed from a plate, Lige never failed to be present, and often got a smart slap from Sukey's paw for interference at such critical times. But great was his perplexity when the cubs were discussing something unknown to raven diet, such, for example, as the molasses-jug that Sukey loved to get hold of, for there

were always stray drops and streaks of sweetness to be licked off. At such times Lige would run round and round the jug, evidently puzzling his brains as to what on earth that bear could find that was so good. And often, after Sukey had "licked the platter clean," the bird would carefully investigate the jug, pecking at it and rolling it over in the vain effort to discover wherein might lie its charm.

At times he would seem to lose patience with the cubs, and would grab one of them by the ear and pull for dear life; but, beyond a casual upper cut with a deft paw, the bears took little notice of him. Once, however, as Nell was letting Sukey lick syrup off a stick, Elijah's squawks of protest became so insistent and ear-splitting that Sukey, retaining her hold on the stick with one paw, reached down with the other and gave the astonished raven a slap that nearly flattened him to the ground, letting

out at the same time a growl, as if to say, "That for your impudence, bird!" After such a rebuff Lige's rage knew no limits, and he would fly to some point of vantage and give voice to such a furious series of vituperations and insults that Sukey would surely have been crushed had she understood them.

Yankee the raven cordially detested, and he loved nothing more than stealing the cat's meat right under her eyes out of the plate. This did not always succeed, as Yank was on the watch, and many a slap she dealt him in the course of his marauding career. Once he deliberately pecked the end of her tail, and, as she turned to avenge the insult, made a dash at the plate and grabbed a piece of meat which he carried off in triumph. Often she would lose all patience and chase him in earnest, but Lige would merely fly to a tree or the cabin roof, and there express his opinions on cats in

"THAT FOR YOUR IMPUDENCE!"

general and Yankee in particular with the greatest volubility. As a rule their quarrels were like those of the gondolieri of Venice, more words and gestures than blows. Lige would bristle up and swell out to twice his natural bulk, while Yank, instead of arching her back and swelling up her tail, as she would if attacked by a dog or other animal, would lay back her ears and flatten her body to the ground, no doubt holding herself in readiness for a spring.

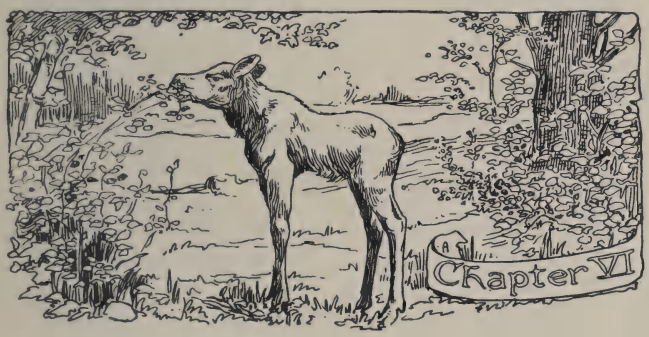
A fortnight after Lige's advent at Camp Buckshaw he was joined by a cousin in the shape of a young crow that Ritson Longmire took from a nest in a near-by grove, at Uncle Ned's request. Now we are taught that crows are the cleverest and most cunning of all our northern birds; but it must be recorded that Jim, as the newcomer was named, did not prove to be a particularly brilliant specimen of his race; in fact Jim was, as Madge rightly called him, a "perfect little ninny." Perhaps

he was overshadowed by his big cousin Lige and the gulls that soon joined the colony, and had no fair chance to "show off." But, truth to tell, he was made a perfect fool of by Lige, who, being so big and black and so like a grown crow, was promptly taken by Jim for his mother and ever afterwards treated as such. One would have thought that, after standing for hours in front of Lige with open mouth and quivering wings, and yelling to be fed, but receiving no sort of response except puzzled looks out of one eye and then the other, the little crow would have seen his error; but he never did. On the other hand, Lige treated him shamefully, and secured for himself the lion's share of all food thrown to the two. Worse than that, when they were feeding together and Jim would occasionally stop to open his mouth and beg the bigger bird to feed him, as mother used to do, the raven would gravely and deliberately pick out of the crow's maw the still unswallowed mor-

sels, and gorge them himself! The innocent Jim never seemed to notice this stepmotherly treatment, but stuck close to his big cousin, even roosting beside him at night. He did not stay at the camp so long as Lige, for, while no ravens lived near by, there were plenty of crows, and it was not long before delegations from them began to take notice of Jim's whereabouts. Uncle Ned was therefore in no way surprised when Jim disappeared, undoubtedly lured back to crowdom by his own folk.

Elijah's departure was rather more astonishing, as on the day before he had shown much affection for his master, flying, as was his custom, to arm or head when called, and squawking with apparent pleasure. Nevertheless the next day he was gone, never to reappear. The call of the wild had been heeded. Uncle Ned, while regretting his disappearance, was quite content, for it was his custom not to place any barriers in the

way of his pets' return to their natural surroundings whenever their instinct demanded. He only hoped that they would learn something at Camp Buckshaw that might be of benefit to them in after life.



NIGGHIAJOOTCH

CHAPTER VI

NIGGHIAJOOTCH

THE boys knew that Uncle Ned had been commissioned by a great museum to capture for its collection a new-born calf-moose; and they knew also that a big envelope had come from Halifax containing the authority to make the capture. They overheard Mr. Buckshaw say to Sam, the Indian, that it was about time to have a look for the little fellow, and they were therefore all excitement, when, one morning, Uncle Ned asked them how they would like to go on a moose-hunt, and vented their feelings in the very decided manner of somersaults and Blackfoot "Kiyis!"

"That 's right, boys. Jest get all that out o' your systems afore we start, for there 's got

to be total silence if you go along with us; otherwise—"

But, of course, the lads swore that they would be as silent as Uncas and the Great Serpent if they were allowed to go; and next morning saw practically the whole party under way in canoes for a distant lake full of islands, on which cow-moose love to bring forth their young, knowing that bears and wildcats are less apt to molest them in such places, though both these animals are good swimmers. A wildcat avoids water as a rule, but he will enter it if he has an object to gain thereby.

As they glided swiftly toward a narrows in the lake, Uncle Ned delivered a warning. They had already established a temporary camp at the lake's head.

"Now I 'm treating you all like old hunters, you see, and I hope nobody will say one word or rattle a paddle from now on, or we 'll lose our moose as sure as shootin'. I had a

feller up here with me once by the name of Paine, Bigelow Paine, and we found an island with some calves on it and started to get 'em. I took a piece o' rope along to tie 'em with, and he said somethin' nasty about countin' calves before they was hatched. Anyhow we searched that island over for hours and never set eyes on those calves. What became of 'em, Lord knows, but did n't that feller Paine laugh at me! Fact, they say he even wrote a book about it. If I ever get him up here again I 'll drown him. Well, we must n't make any more mistakes like that. The only sure way is to have the island surrounded without alarming the cow, that is, if she 's there. There, just hold up a minute, all of you. Now you boys paddle as still as death round through that passage to the north, and watch out sharp that the calves don't run off across that neck o' land on to the main shore. They 'll take the shortest course every time, sure 's you 're born. Don't mind the cow;

she 'll run anyway. Now, Lou and Horace, you take Mr. and Mrs. Blair round the other side and keep well off the shore. Make a big curve and go outside the little islands. When you hear me shout and slap the water with my paddle, get your cameras ready, for there 'll be somethin' doin'. I 've arranged on that signal with Mrs. Cow. How that tenderfoot Paine would laugh if he heard me say that," chuckled Uncle Ned. "Joke on me again, sure enough, if there war n't nary moose there!"

Sam and he waited in their canoe until the rest were out of sight, and then ran up to the mouth of the narrows, which gave them a view of the eastern side of the island, a rather small one. Hardly had they emerged from the narrows, when, right opposite them, on the shore of a little bay about one hundred yards off, they caught sight of a big cow-moose leisurely browsing on a young maple, while a little reddish object lay at her feet.

"Still," whispered Sam. "There's one now. Don't move a muscle. I'll work up round that little point so they can't run off that end."

Both men sat like statues, the only movement being made by the canoe itself, that floated gently nearer and nearer the shore. The motion of Sam's paddle, being on the far side, could not be seen by the moose, and he worked the ash slowly back and forth without taking it from the water. When they were about halfway across the little bay, the moose turned and looked squarely at the green canoe and the two motionless figures in brownish clothing, but, strange to say, nothing about the apparition seemed to arouse her suspicions, and she went on chewing the green leaves and staring stolidly in their direction until they disappeared round the little point. As the canoe reached the pebbly beach, Uncle Ned whispered: —

"Jump out, Sam, and stop any calves comin' your way. I 'll give the signal, and the old girl will run off on the other side, so the others can see her."

So saying, he pushed off again alone, and paddled quietly toward the browsing cow, which seemed to watch him this time with some suspicion, possibly because she got a slight scent. All at once Buckshaw raised his paddle and brought it down on the water with a resounding slap, at the same time calling out: —

"Get out o' there, my beauty!"

The effect on Mrs. Moose was electric. With a rear and a jump she turned and disappeared in the underbrush, followed by the calf. In a moment Ned heard a volley of excited exclamations, as the cow plunged into the lake on the farther side of the island, and swam swiftly across the narrowest arm to the shore, up which she clambered until the forest shut her from view. By that time

Ned had gained the opposite side of the island and called out: —

"Did you see her?"

They had indeed, for she had been obliged to swim by their canoes, and a few snapshots had been taken of her.

"All right. Now watch out that the calf don't get away. It can swim like a fish even if it is no more 'n a week old."

Just then a yell was heard from Sam: "Look out! There he goes, right towards you!"

Then the chase was on, and it was a tough one. The way that little beggar doubled and turned through the cruel tangle of briers, and hid in the thick brush until Uncle Ned once actually stepped on him, was wonderful. But, at last the frightened little chap ran straight into Sam's arms, who quickly wrapped his jacket round him and held him tight. In a jiffy everybody gathered about to view the prize, which proved to be a little bull, as

Uncle Ned had hoped. There was but one, proving that the mother was a young one. The calf's panic was short-lived, for in less than five minutes its little heart ceased to beat so furiously, and it made no effort to escape from Sam's arms. Gradually he relaxed his hold, but the calf only gave a little whine and looked about as if to say, "Well, what next?" Everybody who had a camera took his portrait, and Horace, a good mimic, proceeded to converse with the infant in its mother's language of grunts and whines, and with such success that the awkward little chap was soon following the guide about in the most confiding way. Uncle Ned chuckled again.

"Wish that feller Paine could see that!" he observed dryly. It was evident that he enjoyed his triumph, and that he could already see the calf as one of an admired group in a glass case in the British Museum.

AFIELD WITH YANKEE AND THE CUBS

"What shall we call him?" he asked of the company.

"In Micmac it would be Nigghiajootch; that means little moose," said Sam.

"Nigghiajootch it shall be!" exclaimed Uncle Ned. "Come here, Nigghy boy, and have your little hooflets bound with Uncle Ned's nice soft silk handkerchief, so you won't go and kick holes in the canoe and gallop up and down in it, as that feller Paine said you would."

But Nigghy resented such undignified treatment, and developed a most amazing amount of strength for a mere "square-yard of moose," as Alan called him, having measured him and found him to be a yard each way. It took several of the party to hold the little fellow while his four hoofs were bound together tight; but at last he was carefully lifted and laid in Uncle Ned's canoe on a bed of boughs, from which he sent forth a plaintive little bleat of protest.

The expedition then prepared to make a quick run to camp, so that Nigghy could be released from his bonds as soon as possible.

"Hold on a minute!" called Uncle Ned. "Sammy, run and fetch Methuselah. I almost clean forgot him." The next minute Sam appeared with a snapping turtle in his arms, so large that he could hardly carry it. Having three bullets through its brain, it was supposed to be dead.

"How's that?" inquired Mr. Buckshaw, pointing at the turtle. "I stepped on him by accident when we landed to catch Nigghy, and had to give him a few twenty-twos to quiet him. Ain't he a beaut'? Load him in, Sam. This island is certainly great for big game."

The journey to camp was made in good time and without serious accidents, though Nigghy nearly struggled out of his bonds once, threatening an upset in the middle of

the lake, while "Calamity Mag" all but did the like for her canoe, in which the big turtle had been laid. The great reptile suddenly stuck out one big, horny clawed foot and caught Madge on the elbow, bringing forth from that young person a blood-curdling yell, such as only she could produce. She lurched forward over the bow, while the guide pulled his turtleship farther aft, where he continued to wave his legs back and forth in the liveliest manner, in spite of Sam's solemn assurance that he was dead. "Anyway, he can't feel nothin'," asserted Sam. The vitality of that reptile was beyond belief; for even after its head was off and it was being cut up to make a turtle-stew, those legs still waved defiantly, and likewise the scaly tail. "Calamity" would n't have touched a spoonful of that stew for a "farm down-East"; but most of the others did, and voted its flavor good; the turtle-meat simply could not be chewed, however, and one by

one the diners would get up and wander forth from the festive board just to "see how the weather was!"

Nigghy was glad enough to be freed from his bonds when camp was reached, and he began at once to call for his mother in a plaintive little bleating whine. "Hungry," said Sam. Uncle Ned brought forth a bottle with a rubber nipple, such as ordinary calves are weaned on, and filled it with warm "Peerless" milk and water, sweetened with a little molasses. But Nigghy did not take to it kindly, tugging and biting at the nipple savagely. Mr. Blair at last had to hold him, while Sam poured the milk down his throat, a little at a time. It was some days before he learned to take the bottle like a well-bred calf.

Meanwhile the other men built a small pen of saplings, and in the evening, after a good meal, Nigghy was placed within it, on a nice bough-bed, with a warm blanket tied

round him, for it promised to be a cold night. But he would n't go to sleep, nor let anybody else do so, and called so loudly for his mammy that Sam, with the Indian's sympathy for all forest creatures, got out of his own warm bed, and, taking but a single blanket, went out and lay down with Nigghy for the rest of the night. Strange to say, the little moose cuddled up to the Indian and went to sleep in perfect contentment.

In the morning Nigghy woke with the sun and wanted his bottle. After that he was as tame as a kitten, and would follow anybody who showed him his bottle. He speedily became the whole camp's favorite, and many were the reproaches aimed at Uncle Ned for his bloodthirsty intentions regarding the little calf's future. But, truth to tell, the old woodsman was as loath to shed Nigghy's blood as any of the party. "Guess we 'll forget the Museum for a while any-

way," he said. It was easy to see that, barring accidents, the British Museum stood little chance of making a stuffed calf-moose of Nigghy, whose time was spent between sleeping and cropping the delicate young brakes and other tender shoots.

After an early lunch Nigghy was again securely tied by the fetlocks and laid upon a nice, soft bed of browse and sheepskins. Camp was struck, and the little flotilla of canoes returned in triumph to Camp Buckshaw. On the way Uncle Ned was forced to answer a host of questions from the young folks about moose and their habits. Alan seemed particularly struck with the fact that the mother had not stopped even a second to defend her calf, but Uncle Ned told him he had never known of a case, though he had heard of one.

"A moose can't stand the smell of man," he said. "I believe that cow-moose would have run away just as fast if a two-year-old

baby had toddled up to it. And what's more, I've come to think that if a calf is handled very much by men and the mother comes back and smells it strong on her young, she's likely to abandon it, or at least to avoid it so long that it will starve. So little moose should n't be touched in the woods, at least not with the naked hands, unless they are wanted to be captured, as we wanted Nigghy."

"But would n't the mother fight a bear?"

"Sure she would, and a wildcat too, or a wolf if we had any in Nova Scotia. Just one good blow with one of her great sharp forehoofs would do the work. But all the same, both bears and cats get a whole lot of moose-calves, and I suspect the mothers won't stand up to a big bear; nor will she stay by her calf after it has been killed, so the beasts get it. If a moose only knew its strength, it need n't run from a man, at least not in the close season, when it's against the law to shoot it."

"How about the bulls, Uncle Ned? Won't they fight?" asked Jack.

"No, not even in the matin' time, when they 're supposed to be savage. That is, I mean they won't stand up to a man more than once in a hundred times, but when they do, you 'd better 'get from under'! One sweep of those antlers, or a blow with the fore hoof, and you 're down and out. Of course you can mostly dodge a big moose, but if you was to stumble and fall while he was a-chasin' you, good-by, Joe! A feller by the name of Martin down in Queen's had a big bull charge him, and he plugged off all his shots into him but one, and kept that till the moose was about on him; then he gave it to him and downed him not twenty feet away."

"Were you ever charged, Uncle Ned?"

"I thought I was once, because the bull came my way; but afterwards I came to the conclusion that he was just runnin' away and kind o' rattled like."

"Ever see a fight between two bulls?"

"Sure I have. Old Uncle John McVickar Munro and I were loggin' up on West River, and we came along quietly on the soft, mossy road, when we struck a small bog, and right in the middle were two bulls, about the same size. We heard 'em snortin' before we came up, and so had a chance to creep up and watch. Well, of all the pushin' matches you ever saw! They'd draw off and then run together with their heads down, and push and snort and bellow like mad. The steam just poured out o' their nostrils. Once in a while they'd miss, and then they'd turn and gore each other till the blood ran down their flanks. But it was mostly pushin'. One of 'em was some heavier than the other and pushed him round and round. At last they started in to hook savage, and the big chap caught the smaller one right in the eye, I guess, for he gave a squeal and a bellow, and turned tail and put for t' other side o' the bog

and disappeared. The big feller stared after him like he was surprised, until he got our scent, for the wind was right on to him. My! Did n't his mane raise up, and did n't he make tracks for the next county, up through a big barren chuck-full of windfalls. Did you ever see a moose go when he 's scared? Well, sir, he just went over those ten-foot windfalls as though they was ant-hills. Talk about your champion hurdle-racers! Guess we 've got 'em right here in the woods."

"I don't see how they get through the woods with their big horns," said Alan.

"Why, they just lay 'em back flat on to their shoulders," replied Uncle Ned. "That 's easy. But they don't have horns, young feller, they have antlers. Horns grow steady and stay on for the life of the animal, like a cow's; but all deer have antlers, that grow in about seven months and then drop off, no matter how big and heavy they are. They drop off along in the winter, and soon

after that the bulls leave the cows. I guess they 're ashamed o' their looks."

"But what becomes of the antlers that are dropped? There must be an awful lot of them."

"Well, they 're mostly eaten up by porcupines and rats and mice and what-not, but a good many are found off and on."

"Hurrah! There 's the camp!" shouted Jack. "My, but I 'm hungry!"

NIGGHY DEPARTS AND THE GULLS ARRIVE

CHAPTER VII

NIGGHY DEPARTS AND THE GULLS ARRIVE

AS was natural, Nigghy's fame quite outshone that of the other pets, and people flocked in from miles round Milford to see him. At first he seemed to thrive finely, though by no stretch of the imagination could he be called lively. In fact he was a simple, almost solemn little fellow, usually content to lie about in the sun or crop the young brakes. He learned to recognize his name in a few days, and would respond to his master's call with a plaintive little bleat. But, if docile, he possessed one other strong characteristic, that of obstinacy, and when he wandered a distance from the cabin you could not drive him any more than you could a pig. Uncle Ned soon gave it up, and simply took

the sprawling youngster in his arms and carried him back to the cabin.

Nigghy seemed to enjoy his meals hugely, and it was amusing to see him kneel before his kettle of warm milk and plunge his head into it; for moose are too long-legged to feed comfortably on ground-forage, their food consisting almost entirely of the bark and leaves of young trees, though in summer they are fond of wading into ponds and streams and eating the roots and leaves of aquatic plants. At such times they will often disappear wholly under water. It is curious that in Nova Scotia moose are very seldom seen wading, as in Maine or New Brunswick, keeping rather to the cool swamps in hot weather.

Though it was already June the nights were still cold, and Nigghy slept in the woodhouse, well covered up. When the weather was bad, however, he was accommodated on a mat in front of the fire in the main camp. In

TAKING NIGGHY HOME

many ways he was for all the world like most babies. He would try to eat everything, not excepting newspaper, and seemed in this respect to have less instinctive caution than other young animals. He did not seem to miss his mother at all after the third or fourth day, but followed Uncle Ned round the house and grounds like a dog. The other pets were rather shy of him, he was so big, and the hounds had already been sent to town, as Uncle Ned did not care to risk the tranquillity of his happy family by their presence. From the first, as we know, he feared for Nigghy's future; for it is a curious fact that the giant moose, perhaps the most powerful of all our beasts when left in its native home, cannot thrive when taken from it, and there is no zoölogical garden that ever boasted of keeping a moose alive more than about two years. The trouble may lie in the variety of country required by the moose, — deep swamps, ponds, high ridges, and forests of young hard-

wood trees, all being necessary, according to the time of year. Even when the young moose are allowed to range about freely, they seldom attain their third year, though one or two cases are known of their living longer.

It was not, however, the usual enemy of captive creatures, gastritis, that was the cause of Nigghy's departure from the green glades of his native province to become the admired of the London public in a glass case of the British Museum, but the attack of a vicious hound that one day, in Uncle Ned's absence, smelled out the little moose. On his coming home Nigghy was nowhere to be seen, and Uncle Ned and Sam, who was very fond of him, carefully searched the neighborhood. It was only next day, however, that, to their deep grief, they found poor little Nigghy in a kind of hollow, stretched out cold and stiff. He had evidently fallen into the hole while being chased, and hurt himself so badly that he could not get up. Sadly

the men carried him back to the cabin and covered him up so that they should not see him, and it was a long time before Uncle Ned could bring himself, with tears in his eyes, to think of his scientific duty, and prepare the little body to be sent to England.

Poor little Nigghy! And so the Museum got him, after all. He was the dearest, gentlest, most confiding little pet that ever lived. Ned Buckshaw reproached himself bitterly for taking Nigghy at all, for not protecting him more carefully, and for everything else connected with his short career; for at such times the strong and callous-hearted man was as weak as a child.

It was about this time, on a brilliant June morning, that Uncle Ned and the boys paddled up to a big granite rock in the middle of Allison Lake. There was nothing of apparent interest about it, except that high above swooped and circled two large, graceful birds, with snowy heads and breasts and

dusky backs, uttering from time to time a deep and menacing "Ha-ha-ha-ha!" They were great black-backed sea-gulls, which, like our common herring gull, sometimes go inland to the fresh-water lakes to breed. It was not until the canoe actually grated on the edge of the rock that the boys discovered the reason for the birds' excitement. Before them was a perfect example of "protective coloring," or the art with which Nature clothes many of her creatures in hues and patterns closely resembling those of the earth, water, rocks, or foliage where they live. Two tiny gulls, light-gray spotted with dark, like the granite in a hollow of which their meagre nest lay, nestled motionless at their feet, gazing up at them with terror-struck black eyes. At the snap of Uncle Ned's camera one of them "peeped" plaintively and thrust its head into a crack in the rock. The boys, at Uncle Ned's request, lifted them carefully into the canoe and laid them on some moss,

IN THE NEST
(Protective Coloring)

while an egg which the nest also contained was left behind to comfort the bereaved parents, whose hoarse cries of protest never ceased until the canoe had left the rock afar off. Then both old gulls alighted at the nest, which they apparently found in satisfactory condition, since they made no further complaint, one of them at once settling upon the nest.

As a landing for lunch was being made on the way home, Alan expressed anxiety about the gulls, as they were so very small.

"Never fear," replied Uncle Ned, "you could n't kill 'em 'xcept with an axe. Look rather smaller and weaker than a calf-moose, don't they? But the fact is they are the toughest infants in the world, while a young moose is the most delicate. Odd, ain't it? Just try 'em with a piece o' fish now, and you 'll see they 've forgotten home and mother already!"

Alan had netted a handful of minnows

in the brook, and it was wonderful to see the "gullets," as Jack promptly called them, scramble to their feet with long-drawn-out "peeps," and still more so to view the total eclipse of those minnows, each gull swallowing one, two, three, and showing his fighting blood by quarreling with his brother, or sister, over the seventh. Sisters, Alan insisted they were, for he dubbed them Giroflé and Girofla, after the twins in the light opera.

From the first, gluttony and pugnacity were their chief characteristics. Their ability to stow away fish did not seem to be limited by the size of their bodies, and where a six-inch gull could pack an eight-inch chub was certainly a mystery; but Giroflé or Girofla could put away three or four fish of that size and "peep" for more. Nor did their confidence in their own abilities seem to have limits, for they would tackle fearlessly anything in the food line that they

could lay hold of with their strong beaks. Frequently some very large fish would have to be swallowed, so to speak, by relays, half being down the bird's throat while the remainder still stuck out of its beak, into which it slowly disappeared in the course of an hour or two.

Eels came nearest to balking their swallowing powers, and it was a never-ending source of amusement to the young folks to see a "gullet" tackle a good-sized eel, three or four times longer than itself. At first an energetic hold would be taken of the head, and, with a mighty lift and a series of hard swallows, three or four inches of eel would disappear. Then the gull, keeping a firm hold of what it had, would settle back on its knees to get its breath, after which more heaving and gulping would ensue. If the eel was a whole one, the gull would sometimes have to give up the fight — and the eel — owing to the length, weight, and slimi-

ness of the fish. Occasionally when "Flé" tackled one end of the eel, "Fla" would seize the other, and both swallow heroically until their beaks met about amidships, when a fierce tug-of-war would ensue that was too funny for words to describe. It always ended with one or the other giving up her half, leaving the other a vain victory, however, as an entire eel was too bulky a morsel. Later on the gulls got quite sick of eels. The boys suspected that they knew they were being made fools of.

They were wise little fowls, those gulls, and their sharp black eyes saw everything. Fear they knew not, and neither Yankee nor the bears dared approach them. On one occasion a setter dog belonging to the hotel, perceiving them sitting quietly on the canoe-float, made a rush at them, barking furiously. Were the tiny gulls frightened? By what happened, it is probable that they were not. As the dog bounded on to the float, Giroflé

flew at him and gave him a violent peck in the nose; and as doggie drew back in astonishment, Girofla grabbed him by the end of the tail and pulled a good big tuft of hairs out of it. The last seen of the setter was his hindquarters disappearing over the knoll, his tail between his legs; nor did he ever again show the least curiosity to renew acquaintance with the "Misses Larus Marinus," to give the gulls their scientific family name.

"Scrappiest little cusses ever!" remarked Uncle Ned. "Cleverest, too; got crows and ravens and parrots stung to death. You see the life of a sea-gull is one long scrap for food. Just watch 'em behind a steamer. Not a thing is chucked overboard but a half a dozen gulls are after it, and the quickest and strongest gets it."

At first they were kept at night in a big box, both for warmth and for fear of murderous animals, especially minks. Uncle Ned said that he believed a gull would

fight a mink, but he had good reason to know that such a fight could have but one ending, — in favor of the mink. A few years before, a rumpus was heard one night in a pen by the brook where he kept two half-grown gulls, and Mr. Thomas, taking a lantern and a stout stick, went out to investigate the cause. In the pen he found a small mink sucking at the head of one gull which it had killed. When Del appeared, the mink ran away, but, as he was examining the dead gull, the mink, in its bloodthirsty boldness, ran into the pen again and actually seized hold of the gull in Del's hands. Del recovered from his astonishment in time to grab his stick and give the mink a rap that stretched it out dead.

"Why, if a mink were as big as a bear," said Uncle Ned, "a man-eatin' tiger would be a tabby-kitten to it! Mr. Hornaday told me that right there in his big Zoo, within the limits of New York City, he

TIM, GIROFLA, AND GIROFLÉ

can't for the life of him keep the minks from eatin' up a lot of his finest waterfowl."

The very little girls were not very fond of the gulls, for the odd reason that bare legs had a peculiar attraction for them. Whether or not they took them for something to eat, no sooner did Jo or Edith appear, than the gulls rushed up and began pecking at her legs. It was probably pure gluttony, for they would try to swallow anything that even faintly resembled food, and one of their most amusing mistakes was to try to eat each other's feet. In fact, once a series of awful squawks caused their master to run to the door, where he found that Giroflé's left leg had entirely disappeared down the gullet of Girofla, and it required a deal of desperate kicking to free the imperiled member.

It was not long before all the young people had to be pressed into service to

catch enough chubs, shiners, and perch to satisfy the gulls. There were now three of them, as a friend of Uncle Ned's, Dr. Dunn, had brought him a third as a present, which was named Tim.

POMPEY AND HIS KINDRED

CHAPTER VIII

POMPEY AND HIS KINDRED

JUST off the mouth of Elder Brook in Eleven-Mile Lake is a famous place for trout, and one day, as Uncle Ned was working the canoe slowly toward it, so that the girls might cast their flies in the right spot, a dark object was seen in the water, swimming toward the shore. The girls could not make out whether is was a mink, a muskrat, an otter, or even a beaver, — for it was quite large enough for the last animal. But, as he made no attempt to dive, and swam on very deliberately, they were quite nonplussed. Great was their astonishment when Uncle Ned pronounced it a porcupine.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Madge, "I didn't know porcupines could swim!"

"Swim? Guess they can," said Uncle Ned;

"and so can any animal that lives in the woods when it has to. Why, I've seen wildcats in the water more than once, and foxes too! See how cheeky that beggar is! He does n't even change his course to get farther away from the canoe. I have a great mind to knock him on the head."

"Oh, no, Uncle Ned! You could n't be so cruel!" said Nell.

"Well, I hope I'm not cruel exactly, but we woodsmen have our own ideas about porkies, drat their destructive skins! Well, I guess we 'll let this one go. I like 'em all right 'xcept for their killin' the trees."

The porcupine meanwhile landed on the beach and lumbered heavily into the second-growth timber, where the party presently heard a series of funny snarls and grunts.

"Hm," mused Uncle Ned. "Guess she 's got young ones."

At this the girls were wild to go ashore and get one of the little ones for a pet; but

the old guide put them off with a promise to hunt for one later; so that they finally returned to camp with only a fine string of trout as trophies. It happened, however, the very next day that the girls were out in a canoe with Farish Owen, a friend who had come to visit Jack, when they discovered a young porcupine sitting disconsolately on a big rock called by the natives Pompey.

"Aha, my lad, you're my meat!" cried Farish; and, working the canoe up to the rock without alarming the animal, he landed carefully, and then, with a spring, threw his coat over Mr. Porky, who in a jiffy was stowed in the bow of the canoe and taken to camp in triumph. With due ceremonies he was presented to Uncle Ned, who unwrapped him and let him go free on the cabin veranda. At first Pompey, for so he was immediately dubbed, backed off a bit, and then spent a moment in scrutinizing the company. He seemed very little put out, but

finally turned tail and tried to amble off the veranda. Mr. Buckshaw headed him off, and Pompey sat down and gazed sleepily at his captor. Uncle Ned touched his nose, whereupon Pompey drew back with a nervous jerk, but made no effort to run away.

"Curious," remarked Uncle Ned; "he don't even turn his back and get his tail in commission. They mostly do that."

But Pompey proved to be a remarkable porcupine in many ways, and seemed to have left all his wildness behind him on the rock where he was taken. Not once in the whole course of his career did he offer to strike with his tail, his principal weapon of attack as well as of defense, and in this Uncle Ned declared him to be a remarkable and in fact unique exception from all his kind. His tameness from the very start was surprising; and it is a fact that within two hours after his capture he was sitting contentedly on Uncle Ned's lap, gnawing at a biscuit.

Camp Buckshaw had entertained porcupines before, and there was a large wire-netted pen built round a small poplar beside the cabin all ready for occupancy. Here Pompey was kept nights, and whenever there was nobody left about the cabin to look after the wants of the pets; for it was Uncle Ned's custom to confine his pets when first taken, for so long a time as was sufficient for them to get accustomed to Camp Buckshaw and look upon it as their home. After that they were always allowed to run free.

The North-American porcupine, especially in its younger years, is so covered with long, black hairs that its quills, of which, except on nose and belly, it has enough and to spare, are partly, and often wholly, concealed. In Pompey's case, all the very long quills, those most apt to show, seemed to have been pulled out when he was captured; for Farish's coat, in which he had wrapped his captive, was stuck through with scores

of sharp spines, and it was a long time before he succeeded in extracting them all. As it was, good old Uncle John McLeod, in using the coat one day for a pillow as he took his afternoon snooze on the sofa, got a small quill so firmly imbedded in his nose that he was forced to post off to town and have it taken out by a physician.

A queer, uncanny thing is a porcupine quill, and a very dangerous one. It is tipped with minute barbs that offer no resistance when penetrating, but a good deal when being pulled out. It therefore happens that, if left in the flesh, every movement tends to force it farther in; so that quills have been known to run all over a beast's body, often coming at last in contact with a vital organ, resulting in the animal's death. Therefore, the only safe course, when a quill has become deeply imbedded, is to have it taken out at once. It is said, that by thrusting the quill a little farther in and then withdraw-

ing it, all in one quick movement, the barbs will remain unopened and the quill can thus be pulled out with ease. The movement must be a twisting one.

Let those who come in contact with porky try the experiment. This was always Uncle Ned's suggestion when he was asked as to the value of certain ancient crotchets. Once he set Alan rubbing two sticks of soft dry pine together in order to produce fire, as the Indians were said to have done. After rubbing until his hands were ready to drop off, Alan gave up the experiment and declared that he would in future stick to flint and steel or to the burning-glass in case that despised thing, a good match, was not to be had.

"But," he added, "those sticks were real hot, anyway!"

The fact that Pompey's principal quills were left in Farish's jacket proves how very loosely these weapons of defense are at-

tached to the skin; so loosely, in fact, that they are often flirted out with some violent movement on the part of the animal, — a happening which, no doubt, gave rise to the tradition that porcupines could throw their quills.

However all this may be, it is certain that, so far as appearance is concerned, Pompey was a very hairy but not a spiny individual; though you had but to handle him carelessly to discover that he was really an animated pincushion. Uncle Ned was the only one who cared to take him up, and this he usually did by lifting him by the two front paws, and then being cautious in stroking him the "right way." Yankee rather chummed up with Pompey, but she kept him well at paw's length all the same, for she had had experiences of porcupines before, and once, when she and her twin sister, Bluenose of sacred memory, were skylarking up a tree with another spiny pet of

Uncle Ned's, she had slipped and landed full on Mr. Porky, with direful results.

It must not be supposed that all porcupines are outwardly as quill-less as was Pompey. Some, especially the old "bucks," bear on their backs a miniature jungle of brownish-black and white quills, and on their powerful tails also. This last appendage may be called the porcupine's one weapon of offense, though, strictly speaking, it never actually attacks any animate object. Most naturalists say that it curls up in a ball when attacked itself by a wildcat or bear. In most cases, however, it probably acts as it nearly always does when molested by man. It does not curl up, but endeavors to get its head and fore part of the body in some crevice of rock or under a log, crouching close to the ground and holding its tail ready for action. This, of course, only when it has no chance to make off; for its natural line of retreat is up a tree or into some den

in the rocks. Uncle Ned once touched the back of a porcupine with the cork handle of a fishing-rod while the animal was in this position of defense, and then picked twenty-eight quills from it as the result of one blow! No wonder the beasts of the forest give Mr. "Erethizon Dorsatus," as the wise men call him, a very wide berth, though wildcats are said sometimes to kill him by taking him at a disadvantage, when his quill-less belly is exposed, and ripping that up with a blow of a paw. It is likely that only the young and inexperienced of the panther, wildcat, fisher, and wolverine tribes ever attack the porcupine. It is the same with domestic dogs, nearly every one of which will throw itself furiously at a porky the first time it sees one; but only a "fool-dog" will repeat the experiment after being once subjected to the process of having a dozen or two quills jerked out of its mouth and skin with tweezers.

Mr. Manly Hardy of Bangor, Maine, who has probably personally handled more fur-bearing animals than any other man of the north, once assured Uncle Ned that, while most wild animals that meddle with the porcupine are very apt to lose their lives through the quills, there was one that attacked and ate it with impunity. This is the fisher, or black-cat, which Mr. Hardy says he has never known to be killed by the quills, though he has found hundreds of them lying harmless under the skins of fishers. This is passing strange if true, and Mr. Hardy is a man of truth and great experience.

Porcupines have very strong incisor teeth, which are busy half the animal's lifetime gnawing the bark off trees; and long, powerful claws, though they are plantigrades (flat-footed animals), like the bear and raccoon. They will eat pretty much everything that comes in their way, from cast-off antlers to the verandas of woodland camps; but their

staple food is the bark of trees, particularly hemlocks. Pompey's favorite dishes, strange to say, were milk and the dry biscuit called in New England "crackers." He would, however, put up with almost anything set before him. Like all his kind, he spent most of his time eating and sleeping, and was in a fair way to cultivate a genuine Daniel-Lambert stomach.

Pompey had been an inmate of Camp Buckshaw for a week or more when Lou Harlow, the mighty Indian hunter, brought Uncle Ned a companion in the shape of a diminutive porcupine which he had come by under very peculiar circumstances. The mother had been shot, and in the course of cutting her up this little, as yet unborn, creature was found. It was a most curious example of the pure power of birth instinct, or heredity, that the first act of the little fellow, which was quite lively, was to strike out sidewise with its puny tail. It did not have to

go to the "school of the woods" to learn to recognize danger, or to put in action the weapon Nature had given it. From the circumstances of its premature birth Pompey's new friend was christened Julius Cæsar, and perhaps Julius would have thriven and waxed if he had been left only to Pompey's tender mercies, for Pompey was a gentle, friendly soul. But in an evil hour came Brutus, also a present to Uncle Ned. Now Brutus was the very opposite of Pompey, being much older and larger, and of a sour, resentful character. No amount of coaxing and cajoling would soften his heart, and his one and invariable answer to all such approaches was a prompt turning of his back and the assumption of that attitude of tail-readiness which plainly looked for trouble. With his fellow porcupines he was, however, more than familiar, and within two or three days lorded it over them like a tyrant. No bowl of milk or toothsome cracker or tender twig of birch or hem-

lock that he did not do his best to keep for himself alone, and, though Pompey succeeded, after a good deal of trouble, in winning his fair share, poor little Julius Cæsar got very poor pickings indeed. Not only that, but Brutus seemed to take pleasure in bullying the little animal between meals. After giving Brutus a fair trial of ten days, and seeing that he was apparently as untamed and defiant as ever, and bade fair to be the death of poor Julius, Uncle Ned one fine day disposed of him. History does not say what became of Brutus, but he was heard of no more.

Soon after his disappearance Uncle Ned opened the pen door and allowed the other porcupines to roam about at will. At first they spent all their time in trees near the cabin, though Uncle Ned was forever pulling them down out of some favorite tree of his. By degrees they wandered farther and farther away, until at last, toward the end of the summer, their relations with the camp were

confined to one visit each day, and that was invariably between half-past one and half-past two in the afternoon. About then, anybody watching could hear a faint swishing among the leaves and then see a black head poked up above some log. If all appeared serene Pompey, followed usually by Julius Cæsar, would amble sedately up the steps and across the veranda to the cabin door, where he would pause and peek in cautiously. If strangers were present, or if he heard any unwonted noises, he would turn away and go back into the woods; but if he heard Uncle Ned's voice, gently urging him to come in and make himself at home, he would cross the threshold and move slowly over the floor to the hearth, where he knew he would find a pan of milk and some crackers. In his wake, but always a minute or two later, would come Julius Cæsar, who never got to be as tame and confiding as Pompey, and the least alarm would send him scurrying out of the cabin;

whereas Pompey, once in full enjoyment of his daily "civilized" meal, was quite fearless and at home. It was droll to see him sit quite upright, with a cracker in one paw, or both, just like a dignified ape.

"Ain't he an amusin' little cuss?" Uncle Ned would say. "Just look at him sittin' there, nothin' but a feedin' machine. I can't help feelin' a kind o' sneakin' fondness for porkipines, they 're so sort o' homelike an' comf'table an' outrageous peculiar. But between you an' me they 're about the pure opposite o' what anything or anybody ought 'o be. They 're sure an awful example, that 's what. Look at 'em — they do nothin' but feed, feed, feed, and then sleep. They 're just as we 'd be if our streets and squares were all piled up with steaks and murphies and pie, and all we had to do was just to reach out and grab some. Nothin' but trees all round 'em and all of 'em good to eat. No, they don't even fight, — that 's it, boys. I tell you,

look all through natur' and all through hist'ry, and you'll find ev'ry time that the race o' people or the race o' animals that stops fightin' ain't worth shucks! When they don't have to fight any more for their bread an' butter they get fat an' lazy an' good for nothin', that 's what they do. Just look at those gulls — beautiful, sleek, strong, quick, — an' why? Because they live a life o' scrappin'! Don't you take no stock in those folks that talk about eternal peace an' that kind o' drivel. Peace don't mean alone throwin' away cannons and bayonets. There 's war in gettin' to the office first, in beatin' the ball to first base, in gettin' a big order placed ahead o' the other feller. But that kind o' war ain't enough to keep the human race keen an' strong for its best work. It needs man-to-man fightin', whether with rifles an' intrenchin'-tools or in a canoe-race. I tell you, boys, life is a fight, first, last, an' all the time; an' when you go out into the world

to cut your swaths in it, — just you fight — fight like demons — but fight fair!"

Uncle Ned rubbed his face, which was quite hot with the effort of such undue eloquence, in which he seldom indulged, though he had his own strong convictions on most subjects.

"As to those porkies," he continued, in a more subdued voice, "they show their uselessness; and where the fightin' gulls help the world a lot by cleanin' up and such, those lazy cusses do nothin' that I can think of 'xcept chew up the trees. So you 'll see that old chap Darwin was right. The porkies will disappear, and we 'll all help 'em do so. Let the sentimental people talk as much as they like, the amount of good timber destroyed by Pomp an' his friends is somethin' awful. Their liver 's pretty fine though, that 's a fact, but I could live without it, same 's I can without ice cream."

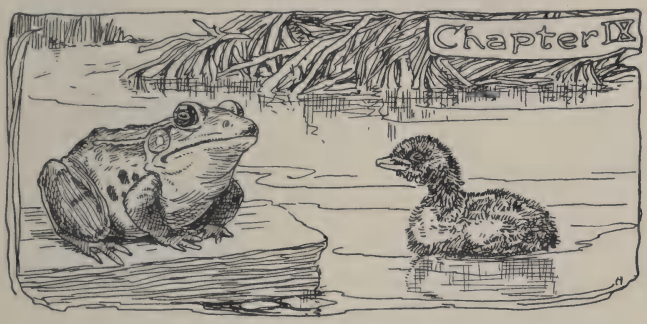
Uncle Ned was not called upon to tell

his young friends anything about porcupine meat, for they had eaten of it many times in the woods and in his cabin. They voted the liver of a young "piggypine," roasted with a strip of bacon over it, *the* tidbit of the forest, though Uncle Ned persisted that beaver-tail was better. But beavers had been protected for some years, and the young folks had not had a chance to taste it. On one occasion, Louis the Indian prepared a real Micmac dish at Camp Buckshaw. It consisted of the entire skin of a young porcupine, cleaned and scraped of all hair and quills, so that it looked, as Nell said, for all the world like a baby's winter undershirt, soft and white and thick. This was boiled in a pot and eaten with seasoning. Lou and Uncle Ned and Sam pronounced it "darn good"; but the others, after tasting of it, declared that they were too generous to deprive the guides of such a dainty. Sam roasted the rest of the porcupine on a kind of frame

before the fire. That was good, but rather tough.

Pompey was one of the last pets to stand by the cabin, in spite of Uncle Ned's poor opinion of him and his kindred. But he unfortunately fell a victim to his constitutional gluttony. Not only did he take a fancy to Mr. Thomas's apple-trees, causing murmurs and even remarks, but one fine morning, on entering the pantry, always sacred to the perfect housewife, Mrs. Thomas saw before her astonished and indignant eyes that same Pompey sitting squarely in the middle of a big squash-pie!

This was Pompey's undoing!



LOONS, FROGS, AND BEAVERS

CHAPTER IX

LOONS, FROGS, AND BEAVERS

IN Milford Lake, though bordering on a settlement, a pair of loons had established themselves, and Uncle Ned did all he could to keep them from being shot at and otherwise molested by both natives and summer guests, who, perhaps fascinated by the difficulty of the shot, never miss an opportunity to send a rifle-bullet after them. There was plenty to be said against loons from the fishermen's point of view, for undoubtedly they destroyed many fish, though they probably caught more coarse fish, such as perch and chub, than the lightning-like trout. But Uncle Ned was more than willing to give a few of the thousands of Milford trout for the delight, as it was to him, of having the loons, with their wonderfully weird, other-world

music, on the lake. He had no patience with those who called the many cries of the loon discordant and disagreeable. Discordant they sometimes were, but the best music does not consist entirely of pure harmony or melody, just as shadow is needed to set off the sunshine. He maintained that the vocal expressions of the loon comprised the whole range of their feelings, and that these were singularly like the emotions of the human heart. He found in them deepest melancholy and tenderest longing; defiant challenge and sharp warning; serene content and uproarious hilarity. And they told of the weather to come, even better than the blue jays.

"There 's no limit to their talk," he would say. "I had a couple o' musicians up here one summer, and they spent a day disputin' about the exact notes of one o' their longest calls. Why, Lord bless you, that call has more variations than you could remember, and every loon has his own private way o' makin' it.

It 's just the same with all cries of birds and animals. There 's always a general sameness, but with those that have many cries, like the loon, or crow, or moose, every individual differs a little from the other, just like humans. An' I say loons *are* musical, though I have a book up there on the shelf, a good one too, all about the birds and their music, that tells all about the partridge and the horned owl but says nary word about old loony. Funny, ain't it?"

"Of course," he went on, "I won't say a loon should n't be shot once in a while if you really want to have it stuffed as a trophy. But there are plenty of 'em on the far-away lakes. I want mine left alone here. I remember once when that feller Bigelow Paine was with me, we got a big loon and two half-grown ones caught in a big cove in the Liverpool River, that had a very narrow outlet. If she 'd been alone the mother would have got out soon enough, swimmin' under the canoes, but the

little ones did n't dare to try it, though at last one of 'em did disappear, probably that way. We potted at 'em for some time with twenty-two rifles, as Mr. Paine wanted 'em to stuff, but had to go to lunch at the mouth of the cove without doin' any damage. While we were eatin', the other two chaps, Del Thomas an' Charlie Charlton, took the rifles and thought they 'd bring back the loons. We heard about fifty shots more or less, but they came back with nary loon. Then they ate and Paine an' I had another hack at it. I put him right near the shore among some tall hardhacks an' alders, while I went down to the other end o' the cove to scare 'em up to him. The way we did it was to keep pottin' at 'em the moment one would come up, though they were wary all right and would just show their heads. But at last the big one came up right opposite his stand, and he got her right through the neck, — a darn good shot, I tell you! Just at that moment the little

feller come up opposite me, and I had the luck to pink him all right. We picked 'em up with the canoe, an' maybe we did n't march back to camp with our heads high! If you ever go to the Players Club in New York, you 'll see 'em there yet, they say. Paine had 'em put up there."

Jack and Alan were well aware of the affection that Uncle Ned had for loons, and having heard from a country boy that there was a loon's nest on a little island in a lake about three miles from the settlement, they determined to watch it and, if possible, to capture a young one or two as presents for their old friend. It was a mistaken, fatal determination, but the boys meant well. Taking a light trap one morning, they drove to the lake and paddled out to the island in an old birch-bark canoe, to see whether the eggs had yet been hatched. The nest, a mere hollow in the marshy ground between two rocks and slightly lined with coarse grass, was

off!" exclaimed Jack. "Let her go now; hit her up!"

Bending to their paddles they were soon nearly up to the loon, which still seemed reluctant to escape, making little dives and coming up in almost the same place. Presently the boys discovered the cause of her actions, — two little black objects in the water, too tiny to see at any long distance. Disregarding the mother's desperate attempts to lead them away from the loonlets, imitating a broken wing and other performances well known to the lads, a dash was made for the chicks, which seemed more dazed than frightened, and it was only a matter of a couple of dips into the water, to land them safely in the old canoe.

When, on the afternoon of the same day, they proudly presented their rare booty to Mr. Buckshaw, they were very much surprised to see an expression of puzzled pain

on his usually serene countenance in place of the smile of joy they had looked for.

"Young loons, sure 's you 're born!" he exclaimed. "Boys, boys, you meant well and I'm much obliged to you; but I wish you had n't taken 'em."

The boys looked chapfallen. "Why, what 's the matter, Uncle Ned?" asked Alan.

"Well, you see, they won't live," replied the guide. "As big and strong and tough as a big loon is, just so hard to bring up are the little ones. Does seem sometimes as if the bigger and more powerful a grown-up thing is, just so much more helpless are its children. Take moose, for instance, or a man either, for that matter. Ain't a baby about the most helpless thing on earth? But say, ain't they cute now?" he went on, regarding the pretty loonlets affectionately. "We 'll do our best for 'em anyway. Only I had a pair once when I was about your age, but they

only lived a couple of days. Let 's take 'em down to the water. No use taking 'em back now; they 'd die before you found the mother."

From the first they were apathetic little chaps, and seemed to have no fear. In fact, when they were caught by the boys they made no attempt to dive, but actually swam toward the canoe. Unlike most other young birds they did not appear to be very hungry, and paid little or no attention to the flies and tiny pieces of fish that were held out to them, until Uncle Ned imitated the call of the mother, when they would rather sleepily open their bills, as if by instinct rather than from hunger. They seemed to enjoy themselves in the water, but trembled with cold as the sun went down, and Uncle Ned put them in a box filled with cotton-wool in the cabin. Before bedtime, however, the smaller one wilted down and died. His brother seemed lively in the morning, and all day Uncle Ned

had hopes of rearing him; but toward night he, too, began to be very quiet and refuse to take notice of food, and next morning the episode of the loons was ended.

"Well, at all events," remarked Mr. Buckshaw philosophically, "young loons can't be had every day, and Mr. Chapman will be glad to get 'em." He referred to the well-known bird-naturalist, or ornithologist, of the American Museum in New York, to whom the little loons were sent, after being skinned and prepared. They were pretty little creatures, covered with black down on the back and shading through gray to the belly, which was white.

About this time Agamemnon made his appearance in the brook that entered the lake not far from the camp. He was really from Pike's Run, at the foot of the lake, where, one fine evening, he had made the great mistake of taking a red-ibis trout-fly for something especially luscious, an error that

resulted in a very painful tussle, at the end of which he found himself a prisoner in a landing-net on the bottom of a canoe. But his captor, who was Alan, trained in the best of schools, that of Uncle Ned, had no hostile intentions in regard to him. He merely brought him home to be king of all the bull-frogs in Milford Brook, a position in life for which his enormous size and double-bass voice especially fitted him. Uncle Ned kept him near his canoe-float long enough for them both to become acquainted, and the guide claimed, with a twinkle in his eye, that he had succeeded in gaining, not only the friendship, but the affection, of his amphibian majesty. Certain it is that he had but to appear at the brookside and call Agamemnon to have the latter swim pompously over to him. To be sure, he had, for this act of magic, a wand made from a switch of alder with the leaves stripped off except a small bunch at the end. This he flicked

about, imitating the movements of a fly in the grass, a process that never failed to attract the big frog, which, watching his chance, which Uncle Ned was careful to give him, would pounce upon the bunch of leaves and forthwith swallow it. Often he would get it so far down his gullet that Uncle Ned would lift him clear of the water and swing him round and round until he got sick of holding on. But Agamemnon was dull, to put it mildly, and he never perceived that his master was making sport of him. Again and again would he go for that bunch of leaves, and be swung round in the air until Uncle Ned had to stop for laughing at him.

"Agamemnon," he would say to the frog blinking in stupid perplexity, "of all things on the earth or under it you are certainly the champion chump; and if ignorance and stupidity are a sign of happiness, then there 'll have to be an eighth heaven created specially

for you! I have a great mind to fatten you up and eat you!"

During the summer there was quite a competition among the young folks in stocking the brook with big bull-frogs, but, though many, including the overgrown Ajax, were added to the company, not one could vie, either in bulk, voice, or stupidity, with King Agamemnon.

One day Uncle Ned showed his young friends the tooth of a beaver, and they could hardly believe that it was fully three inches long; but so Alan found it when he measured its graceful curve. Most of the tooth was firmly planted in the beaver's head when alive and could not be seen. Uncle Ned told some wonderful things about beavers: how they had very small brains compared with the size of their heads and yet were about the cleverest animals to be found in the woods; all about their marvelous dams and tree-cutting. In fact, he got

his audience so wrought up that nothing would do but he must take them to Pike's Lake to show them the beavers' house and dam there,—an expedition which took place the next week. A lot of "beaver-work" was found, including some trees of large size that had been cut down by the teeth of these industrious creatures, who fill their houses, or rather the entrances to them, with young branches upon which they feed during the winter, pulling them in whenever they want them, just as a good housewife goes to the pantry or the cellar for what she needs. Going down the stream, Uncle Ned made quite a large hole in the beaver-dam for the canoes to get through, a proceeding which the girls thought cruel to the beavers. But Uncle Ned reassured them, saying that it would n't be many hours before the beavers would have the hole stopped up tight again, and with little trouble; for they could n't afford to let the

lake get too low by the water running out. If they did, their houses would be too high out of water in the winter.

As the party rested at noon in an old lumber-camp, the sharp eyes of Alan discovered what to him was new and wonderful, namely, the fact that hornets feed on flies of all kinds. He called his companions' attention to his interesting find, and for half an hour everybody was busy watching the new sport, which Jack dubbed "horneting." There were many black flies and other insects flying about in the camp, mostly near the roof, where it was hottest, and among them a few big hornets, like battle-ships among a lot of small cruisers, as Alan said. Suddenly a hornet would make a quick dash, and, if one watched closely, it could be seen that it held a fly between its forelegs or in its mouth, it was hard to see just how. The hornet would then alight on a beam, and in a second

one wing of the fly would be seen dropping to the floor, the next moment the second wing would fall, and the hornet, having thus rendered the fly incapable of escape, would fly out of the camp and, in all probability, home.

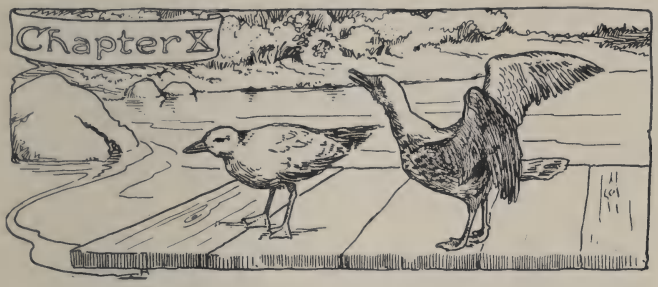
When the boys asked Uncle Ned what the hornets did with the flies they captured, the guide seemed rather uncertain.

"I was told once by a bug-crank that was up here," he finally said, "that they took 'em to their nests and made a kind of a paste of 'em, and they kept that to feed their young on. You see, if they killed the flies the paste wouldn't last very long, but would rot; so they keep the flies alive. Nice, ain't it?"

"How cruel," exclaimed Lucy.

"Yes, Nature's about the cruelest thing we know of," answered the old woodsman. "Everything preys on something else it needs in its walk of life. I do' know whether

you can call it cruel though, for it's really only that when something barbarous is done unnecessarily. Nature is fine and noble and beautiful when she wants to be, but that ain't all the time, you'll observe. And very often she's cruel and wasteful and stupid, yes, and ugly too. She makes lots o' mistakes, does Nature! But we must give her a chance, for, I tell you, my young friends, she ain't through yet! She's goin' right on developin'!"



THE GULLS TEACH THEMSELVES TO FLY

CHAPTER X

THE GULLS TEACH THEMSELVES TO FLY

TOWARD the first of August the lakeside in front of Camp Buckshaw became a point of particular attraction. In the first place Hænsel and Gretl, two of Yankee's kittens that had been kept by Uncle Ned, began to develop in a most interesting manner, and the Milfordites, particularly the General, often came to the float to watch them fish; for Hænsel and Gretl were real fishermen. Most cats will scoop goldfish out of water, an element which they hate; but these kittens went far beyond that. Uncle Ned was accustomed to keep a number of small fish in an old boat at the float, in the bottom of which there were some two to five inches of water, the bow resting on the shore. From her earliest kittenhood Yankee

herself had known the float as a place of delightful possibilities in the way of food, and no canoe expedition ever returned without finding her waiting there, with erect tail and welcoming "meow!" The moment the canoe touched the float, Yankee was on board with one spring, and woe to any fish that she discovered. A catch of trout was kept safely from her, though one or two little ones, if perch could not be found, were always reserved to reward her vigil. And Yank was aristocratic in her tastes. If, among a dozen fish cast upon the float, there happened to be one trout, she had it by the head in a flash; and she would leave perch that had been thrown to her and follow the fisherman who was carrying off the trout, meowing piteously for a taste.

She was not very much afraid of the water, but her children were still less so, and great was the marveling when Hænsel and Gretl one day discovered that the old boat was

DOING A TWO-STEP

full of live fish, and promptly waded in and caught as many as they could eat! At times they would go in so deep that their little bellies were soaked when they sprang out on the float with a captured perch or chub. They were, in truth, the remarkable children of a still more remarkable mother.

About this time, the last week in July, the gulls began to discover that they had wings, and that these were gradually but rapidly feathering out. At first they contented themselves with flapping these half-grown appendages with great vigor, for all the world as if they knew that such exercises would help their growth. The next step in the art of flying, for this was their task for the next month, was to do a rapid "two-step" without moving either forward or backward. In the course of the performance they would often lose their balance and have to recover it by using their bills against the float. The two-step was then combined with a little

run, accompanied, a few days later, by little jumps into the air, very awkward and funny.

They also began to enlarge the area of their swimming journeys, and one day discovered the swimming-raft that the young people had built and moored some fifty yards from the float, and thence they immediately transferred the scene of their flying experiments. Now, without saying that the little gulls "thought," or "said to themselves" as some of our story-tellers would have it, it nevertheless remains true that instinct caused them to make an excellent choice, for at the end of the raft was a spring-board. The raft was a long one, and Giroflé, Girofla, and Tim were soon running the whole length of it with outstretched wings, often raising their strident little voices in a kind of exultation or excitement during these runs. Girofla, who was the biggest of the three, and probably by a few days the oldest, seemed to take the lead in their exercises, and it was she

who first failed to stop at the raft-end of the spring-board, but kept right on up. Uncle Ned was watching proceedings, and he thought at first that the gull would take the leap off the end. But Girofla was not yet ready for this radical step, and soon the other two gulls were imitating the run up the spring-board.

It was only a couple of days later, however, that the biggest gull gained courage and confidence, and, after one or two balking attempts, launched herself off the end into the air. It was only a yard to the water, but she came down rather awkwardly and swam away with an alarmed "Ha-ha-ha!" This was the turning-point, and in less than a week afterwards the leap from the spring-board was a regular thing with all three "gullets," just as the Wright brothers used the monorail to launch their airships upon their aerial journeys.

It was some time, though, before any of

them succeeded in raising itself from land or water by the force of its own wings. There was a kind of intermediate state of half-paddle, half-fly, in which they would race over the water with much ado and splashing and exclaiming. Then a jump from the spring-board or a rock into the water would result in a kind of sailing out, like the leap of a flying squirrel; and finally, one morning, when Uncle Ned went down to the float to feed the gulls, he was astonished and pleased to see Girofla fly about half the distance from the raft to the float before striking the water. From that time all three gulls made rapid progress in the art, and on the 7th of August Girofla and Giroflé were flying freely, whenever and wherever they listed.

Tim reached his mastery of wing a few days later. There was something pathetic about Tim anyhow. He came from another lake, and was never quite admitted to close intimacy by the others. It seems very odd

that this should be the case, when all three were brought together when they were not yet a fortnight old, but so it was. When they went to sleep at night Giroflé and Girofla could always be seen close together, while Tim roosted all alone by himself at some little distance. Animals and birds, like human beings, have distinct individual characteristics, as Uncle Ned always affirmed.

From the first the gulls invariably worked "into the wind," that is, facing the wind. They were consummate sailing-masters, and would fly clear round Huckleberry Island (opposite Camp Buckshaw) in order to make a windward landing. Not once did Uncle Ned catch them making a mistake in this department of seamanship, so perfectly were they guided by their instincts, inherited from countless generations, though there were no parents at hand to teach them. The bird flies like its mother and cries with its mother's voice and exact notes, even if it never saw the

parent. And thus, too, our gulls became experts in the art of flying without a day's attendance at the "school of the woods"!

Attempts were made by full-grown wild gulls in the course of the summer to lure Uncle Ned's pets away from their stepfather. With hoarse cries they would sail far above them, and occasionally swoop down past the little ones, who, on their part, were in no manner fascinated by the pleadings of the old ones, very likely their own parents. On the contrary, they showed signs of fear, and, on the approach of the big gulls, would swim or fly to the canoe-float, and even waddle up to the camp itself.

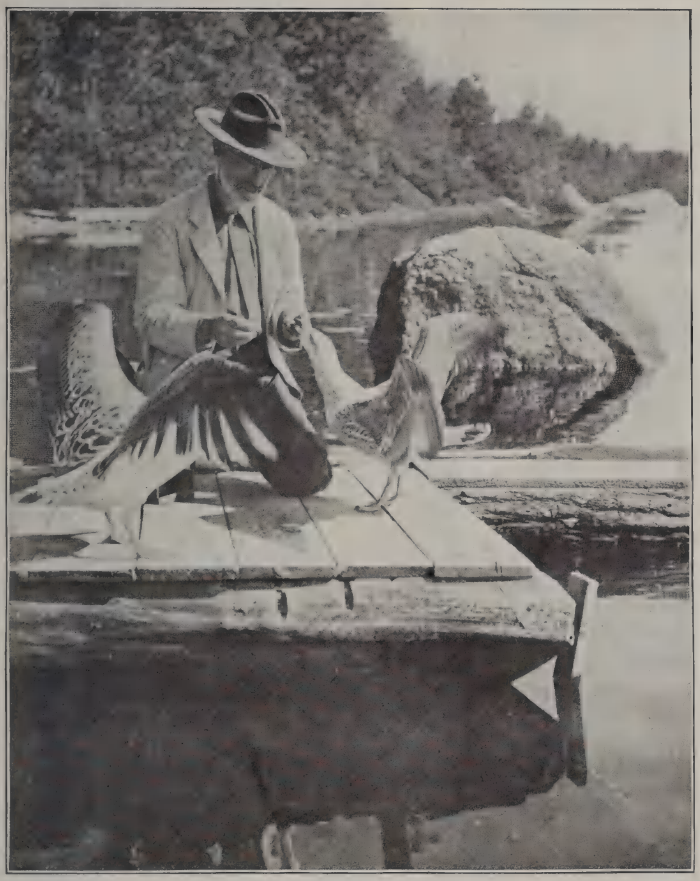
Nevertheless, the occasional visits of their elders no doubt accustomed them to a knowledge of the world beyond the confines of Milford Lake, and led at last to the great resolution that Uncle Ned expected, sooner or later, to be taken.

The gulls learned to know their friends

well, and their affection was measured by the number of fish that were given them. Highest in their estimation undoubtedly stood the old General, who wielded the trout-rod as well as he once had wielded the sword, and who never returned from a fishing excursion without bringing them their goodly share of tidbits. A fine old fellow was the General, the hero of two wars, with scars a-plenty and a heart as big as his stature was tall. His many years on the plains had made him familiar with all kinds of animals and birds, and he loved all Uncle Ned's pets. But Yankee was his favorite, and it was his especial delight, when, as was his wont of a Sunday afternoon, he wandered down to Camp Buckshaw for a pipe with Mr. Buckshaw, to be met on the rocky path by Yankee, who would roll on the ground and meow with pleasure at the mere sight of him.

Toward the middle of August the gulls would accompany Uncle Ned whenever he

went canoeing, and would frequently settle in the water near by and swim along beside the canoe, always on the lookout for fish. Their beautiful dark eyes were of wonderful clearness of vision, and even a small fish held up in the hand would bring them flying like great white eagles from a rock a quarter of a mile distant. But if the hand were empty their movements were of a different and far more deliberate character. They might come to the familiar call of "Gully! Gully!" but slowly, in great circles that grew narrower and narrower until the beautiful birds settled down upon the lake with an ease and grace that no swan could rival. It was a favorite sport of Uncle Ned's to call them down out of the sky when they were circling so high above the earth that they looked no larger than swallows. He felt the exultation of some ancient magician in thus commanding the movements of these powerful, graceful, angel-like creatures. Compared with them,



FEEDING THE GULLS

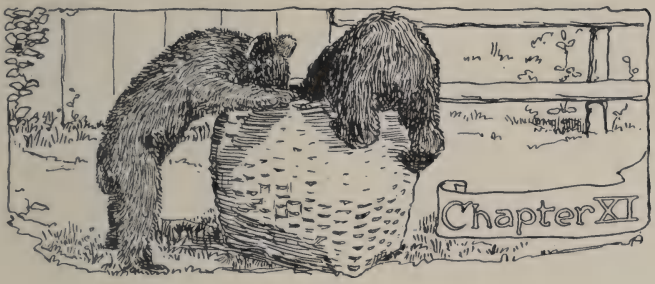
other birds seem clumsy in flight. When the eagle retires to the shelter of cliff or tree before the coming storm, the sea-gull, and especially the northern species, like the black-back, seems to delight in flying in its very face, and its defiant cries may be heard over the roar of the angry wind after the black clouds have swept earth and sky and water from our view.

The strange gulls appeared more often toward the middle of August, and Mr. Buckshaw's pets occasionally joined them in their lofty flights; or perhaps it would be more correct to say, that the old gulls joined the young ones, who, however, soon got to have no fear of their elder relatives. The youngsters flew quite as well as the others, and could be distinguished from them only from having grayish instead of snow-white breasts.

One day Tim alone appeared at the float in answer to Uncle Ned's invitation to a fish-dinner, but next evening the two missing

ones were on hand once more. That was the last seen of Girofla, for in the morning Tim and Giroflé were left alone, the former wearing a dejected, forsaken look. On the evening of the next day, the 26th, there was a dance for the young people in one of the hotel cabins, and the veranda, facing the lake, was illuminated with Japanese lanterns. During the supper-pause the two gulls came swimming up out of the darkness, and were welcomed with joy by the dancers, who fed them with pieces of cake and sandwiches. It was their last appearance in society, for they never came again to Milford, at least not that year.

Uncle Ned sent up a fervent prayer to the Good Spirit that their lives would always be happy, and that no man, in wanton cruelty, would ever attempt to harm them or any of their beautiful race.



HIGH JINKS OF THE CUBS

CHAPTER XI

HIGH JINKS OF THE CUBS

IT was a very fortunate thing for Uncle Ned that, as an old woodsman, he was accustomed to early rising; otherwise it would have gone hard with his "beauty sleep"; for just above his head, on the roof, roosted Lige, who began walking round the roof at gray dawn, uttering his long drawn-out, "Qua-a-ahk!" which was always a signal for Jim's answering, "Hock! Hock!" or his appealing, "Ah-ah!" In a trice there was a chorus from the veranda of "Kwee-a! kwee-a!" which notified the sleeper that certain gulls were hungry; and a snarl or two from the bear-house would cause Yankee, who slept at the foot of Uncle Ned's bed, to rouse herself with a sleepy "Meow!" for a good-morning.

At first Mr. Buckshaw used to harden his heart and take his dip in the lake before attending to the wants of his many pets; but as they grew older they raised such a din that he was afraid the whole village would be awakened, so that all the bird-kind were fed as soon as he got up, the rest being looked out for when he was dressed and before taking his own breakfast.

But early morning did not always pass as peacefully as this. Sukey's proneness to find or make holes in the netting of the bear-house has already been mentioned, and this ingenuity of hers several times caused Uncle Ned to hop out of bed earlier and in a far livelier fashion than usual. The back-door always stood ajar, and, though there was a heavy weight against it, Sukey's strength was sufficient to push this aside, and Uncle Ned would be awakened by an angry yell from Yank and a snorting "Woof!" from the cub, or, more likely, the smash of some bowl

or platter as it was dashed to pieces on the floor. Finally, a short chain was used to secure the door, and the master of the house felt reasonably secure; but that bear was incorrigible. The very next day she succeeded in scaling the roof by means of a young tree, and Uncle Ned was aroused by a most discordant duet of raven squawks and growls and "woofs." Before he could gather his sleepy senses there was a curious scratching in the chimney, a heavy fall into the fireplace, fortunately without a fire in it, and the next moment a very filthy and frightened bear-cub rushed out into the room, made a couple of panicky turns, and, with a jump, landed in Uncle Ned's very bed!

In an instant Yankee threw herself on the cub, and such was the savage and perplexing mix-up of claws and teeth for a minute that the poor man could do nothing but pull the clothes over his head and wait for victory to declare itself for one side or the other. This

it speedily did, and the battle now turned into an utter rout, with Sukey careering for her life round the cabin and over tables and chairs, and Yank hard on top of her, cuffing her like mad. In despair Uncle Ned rushed to the door and threw it open, and Sukey was quick to take advantage of this avenue of escape. The cabin looked as if an infant tornado had been amusing itself there. The inkstand was overturned and Uncle Ned's papers all smeared and torn; the breakfast-table, with its neat plates and cups all set for breakfast, was a wreck; the big bowl of milk for Yankee and Nigghy and the cubs themselves, lay in pieces on the floor, with its contents trickling about in various directions; and over all was a layer of ashes that reminded one of a house in Pompeii after an eruption of Vesuvius. There is no use recording what Uncle Ned said on this occasion, but he certainly rivaled Lige in eloquence, and his words were easier to understand.

CAN'T SEE WHAT SHE FINDS IN THAT JUG

But this was but an incident in Sukey's joyous career. Not long afterwards, when the cabin had been left alone for a couple of hours, both bears succeeded in getting out of the bear-house, and an open window in the cabin was more than an invitation. When Uncle Ned and his friends came home they saw one very unkempt-looking bear licking itself on the veranda, and perceived, as it scampered away guiltily, a thin streak of something dark flowing from it as it fled. Upon examination Uncle cried, "Molasses, as I 'm a sinner!" The next moment out popped the second bear through the window and scurried under the cabin. With sinking heart Uncle Ned threw open the door, and the full extent of the "Sack of Camp Buckshaw" was exposed to view. Books, papers, pieces of crockery, cartridges, fishing-tackle, clothes, fire-wood, medicine bottles with the corks out, pots and plates, in fact pretty much everything that the cabin held, was

strewn upon the floor in disorder, and over all and around all and in all were jam and molasses, molasses and jam, strawberry-jam! On a high shelf Uncle Ned had kept a two-quart bottle of this, his favorite sweet, and those bears, how, goodness knows, had got at it and knocked it to the floor. Then they had pulled the cork out of the molasses-jug and overturned that. The result was unique, unspeakable. There was not a chair or a table that was not smeared with the sticky combination; the lounge and all its cushions were covered with it, and those dratted cubs had even wormed their way in between the sheets of Uncle Ned's bed, the sight of which would have sent a neat housewife to the insane asylum.

In the midst of the awful wreck Uncle Ned stood, drawing his breath in gulps. "Great — !" he gasped, but the word died on his lips. For what was the use of language? There was none that could do even

faint justice either to the appearance of that room or to his own emotions. It was not long, of course, before the sense of humor overmastered all others; but, after the good long laugh with which he and the rest relieved their feelings, Uncle Ned remarked grimly, "I kind o' believe those cubs are gettin' a little too grown-up for this quiet neighborhood!"

A week later, and he was sure of it. For a few days the cubs seemed chastened and contrite, though it was but the calm before the storm. Butter would n't melt in Sukey's mouth as she looked up at her master out of those wicked little bloodshot eyes. She would even try to play with Yankee; but the cat was very much on her dignity, and a quick right and left that made Sukey howl with pain was her reward. One morning Yank showed a trait that is common in dogs but very rare in cats, namely, taking the master's part in a

scuffle. Sukey had committed some minor sin and Uncle Ned was in full chase of her for purposes of punishment, when out of the shed rushed Yankee, passed her master, caught up with the fleeing cub, which she proceeded to cuff soundly until it ran under the house.

Occasionally the cubs would make expeditions to the neighboring cabins, which often resulted in wild panics on the part of the more timid ladies and the small children, who forgot that the bears were still more terror-struck than they. A scream would send the cubs under some cabin, where their presence would frighten the inmates out of their wits; and it often required a lot of coaxing and show of food before the bears would consent to come out.

One good turn they did the little community, which bore the character rather of a private country-club than the usual hotel with cabin annexes. An extremely objec-

tionable lady of very vast proportions and a tendency to gossip had grown to be a nuisance to the other guests, but there seemed to be no way of getting rid of her.

"I'll fix her!" said Uncle Ned; and one day he let the cubs loose about seven o'clock in the morning on the lady's veranda. As the door was ajar, the cubs, always curious by nature, lost no time in entering. The inevitable explosion, awaited by a small but select company concealed near by, soon followed, the shrieks of the affrighted lady reaching to the hotel kitchen, and causing the maids to rush out to see what the matter was. In the end nobody was hurt, but the fat lady left town two days afterward.

Many of Uncle Ned's pets had their Waterloos. We have seen that, in Pompey's case, it was squash-pie. In that of Rube and Sukey it was education, and religious education at that. You shall see.

About a mile up the road from the hotel

stood the little village church, in which, during summer, services were held twice a month by a very good but very old-school clergyman named Mr. Skinner, who took the Scriptures as he found them, and made no compromise with what he called the "milk-and-water way of preaching" of some of his sacred calling. His rule over his flock was based more upon threats and awful examples than upon persuasion. One of his physical features was a very bald head, about which some of the younger members of his congregation were wont to crack jokes, several of which, coming to the worthy man's ear, aroused his wrath. One afternoon in late August the Sunday-School class was listening patiently to a discourse by the Rev. Mr. Skinner on the sin of irreverence and disrespect toward one's elders, and the terrible things that were sure to happen to them unless they mended their ways. Even the elder children began to feel

rather nervous and uncomfortable, as the direful programme was unrolled, while the eyes of the little girls and boys fairly stuck out of their heads in terror.

"Do you know what once happened to children for mocking a good man who had had the misfortune to lose some of his natural hair?" roared Mr. Skinner. "Listen, for I tell you it may happen again! Hear what is told of it in the Second Book of Kings! 'And he (that was Elisha) went up from thence into Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she-bears out of the woods, and tare forty and two children of them!' Do you hear what the Good Book says? Two she-bears, with open mouths and terrible fangs fell upon these unregenerate children and

tore them limb from limb! And that may happen again, boys and girls! Right here in Milford and now, at this instant! For the ways of the Lord are the same as of old, and bears there are in the woods, yes, and plenty of them, and they are savage and cruel and terrible, and I say unto you —!"

Just here a wild scream interrupted the good man, followed by shrieks and cries of terror, the oversetting of benches, and a wild scramble of the panic-stricken children; for down the single centre aisle rushed headlong first one bear, a real bear, and then another! Bringing up suddenly against the high platform on which stood Mr. Skinner at the reading-desk, Rube and Sukey (for it is needless to say it was they who represented on this occasion the wrath of the Lord) made frantic efforts to scale the platform, and the next moment they were upon it, while the shrieking children made a wild rush for the church-door.

Mr. Skinner, who was very near-sighted, was quite bewildered by this extraordinary scene, and his first intimation of the real state of affairs came with a shock as Sukey made a jump for his legs, possibly, in her fright, taking them for a tree. A second before, at sight of the commotion and hearing the cries of "Bears! Bears!" the reverend gentleman had entertained a sudden notion that his wonderful eloquence had wrought this apparent miracle; but the moment he felt the well-grown cub's weight on his leg, and the sharpness of her claws through his thin trousers, a cry of agonized fear came from his lips, and, grasping the oak reading-desk, he frantically endeavored to climb upon it, at the same time trying to shake off the cub. The suddenness and violence of his movements freed him from the bear, and the next moment he was sitting cross-legged on top of the desk, in which safe but ridiculous position he was found half a minute later by Uncle Ned and

the boys, who, having discovered the escape of the cubs, had followed them to the church, arriving just too late to prevent their entrance. In fact, it was probably the closeness of the chase that caused the cubs to run in through the open door.

It took only a short time to corner the bears and secure them with collars and chains, while Mr. Skinner was helped down from his perch on the reading-desk and the children assured that there was no danger to be feared from the little animals, who were much more frightened than they. The result was the breaking up of the Sunday-School class for that day, and a grand procession of bears and children back to Camp Buckshaw. Uncle Ned had apologized hastily to Mr. Skinner, but did not wait to hear that gentleman's rejoinder.

The very next day Charlie Munro might have been seen constructing in his barn a large wooden box, divided into two compart-

RUBE CLIMBING

ments, with stout slats covering one side. It was nothing less than the private car of Reuben and Sukey Buckshaw, in which they were to "go south for the winter," namely, to a certain zoölogical garden in New England, the manager of which was anxious to entertain them.

The morning of their departure the camp was aroused early, for it was thought best to get the cubs past the cabins before the guests were up, as the affair of the church (which the cubs' enemies had described as a "ferocious attack on the minister") and other little incidents had rendered them somewhat unpopular among certain people who, as Uncle Ned said, had been brought up to tremble at the mere word bear, and to believe that they lived mostly on man's flesh.

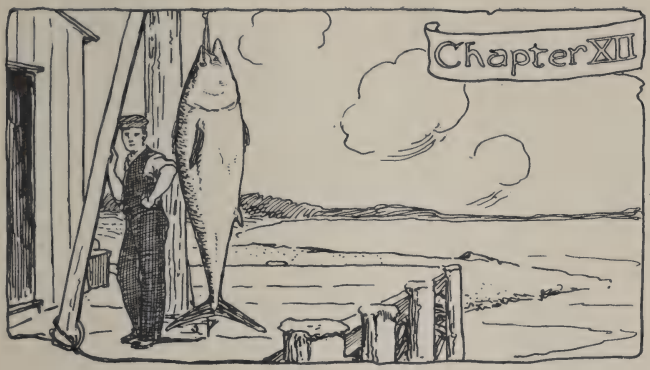
So it was but little after sunrise that the cubs were carried up to the barn in the arms of Uncle Ned and Jack. The latter had Rube,

who was fairly quiet; but Sukey, far more high-strung and powerful, gave the woodsman a hard tussle, for he had neglected to put on his gloves. Frightened at a dog that came bounding out, Sukey struggled with such desperation that she tore herself almost out of her master's arms, and once bit him savagely in the hand. In passing the last private cabin before reaching the barn, she made a great spring, and, before Uncle Ned could prevent, slipped out of his arms and dashed through the cabin door, which was slightly ajar. Uncle Ned made a regular football "flying tackle," and grabbed Miss Sukey on the very threshold, but not before she had been seen by some of the inmates, causing a great slamming of doors and screams of terror from the little folks.

Five minutes afterwards both cubs were securely fastened in their traveling-box, and the last seen of them, as they were driven away, was Sukey, standing up and looking

through the slats with what Uncle Ned always declared was an expression of deep sadness.

A few days later Mr. Buckshaw took the lads on a "surprise-party" trip to the seaside. What happened there is set down in our next chapter.



BATTLE WITH A SEA-MONSTER

CHAPTER XII

BATTLE WITH A SEA-MONSTER

I SAY, Uncle Ned," called out Alan, "see that funny old chap. He 's been watching you ever since we got here. Look, he 's going to speak to you."

Sure enough, a weather-beaten old salt, with a regular sea-roll, hove to in front of the woodsman, touched his cap and said: —

"Mebbe you 're Mr. Buckshaw?"

"I certainly am, and you will be Mr. Nickerson, I 'm thinking. Got everything ready?"

"Ay, sir, the boat 's at the pier with all aboard of her, and there 's been a school o' them fellers seen a mile out this morning."

"Well, that 's luck!" exclaimed Uncle Ned. "Now, boys, you wanted to know about the new surprise I was going to

spring on you. How about taking a little row? Are you seasick?"

Alan laughed in scorn. His father was a naval officer and he could sail a boat like a veteran. Jack was n't so sure of himself, but his doubts failed to dampen his maritime ardor, and a half hour later saw all four in a dory, a mile off shore, where they lay to. Uncle Ned had replied to the boys' eager questions only with a couple of winks at Mr. Nickerson; but the lines and the big reel, and most of all the wicked-looking harpoon that lay in the bottom of the big dory, showed them that something out of the ordinary was in the wind. Not far away some herring-fishermen were tending their nets, and as they watched, one stood up in a dory and pointed out to sea. Skipper Nickerson rose and looked in the same direction.

"I believe they 're comin', sir; I can see the water a-churnin' out there."

"Hurrah!" replied Uncle Ned. "Now

boys, let me get forward, so 's to be near the reel. Steady! That 's right. Now hand me that hook and the biggest herring you can find out o' that bunch."

In a jiffy the big hook was baited and the line partly coiled below the reel, which was really a small wooden winch fitted with a powerful drag.

"Going to use the harpoon?" asked Jack.

"Not now; there are a few little minnows swimming round the harbor, and I thought I'd try to hook one. Just wait."

The skipper rowed slowly toward the nets, keeping an eye to seaward. Uncle Ned stood up in the bow. "There they come! Steady, the herring are comin' right round us! Here they are!"

Just then the water seemed to boil with silver coins, and suddenly a big dark form shot above the surface, almost touching the dory.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Jack. "What was that?"

He was answered by another and yet another rise on either side of the boat. Uncle Ned poised the baited hook, with its long wire leader, carefully, and then, watching a favorable chance, tossed it into the water just in front of the big, dark fish. Like a flash it was snapped up, and Uncle Ned grabbed the handle of the big reel just in time to steady it as the line began to run out.

"Pull, skipper!" he called. "It won't do to have the boat at a dead stop when this darned line runs out!"

The fish started for the open sea, and presently up in the air it went again. The reel sang in spite of the pressure on the drag.

"Pour some water on the reel!" shouted Uncle Ned, for the wood had actually begun to smoke, and a few moments might see the line part. "Look out, the line 's runnin' out — I believe she 'll bust, sure!"

But the line proved to be a strong one, and, with a jerk, the boat sprang forward,

and the next instant was dashing across the harbor like a torpedo-boat. The fishermen near by stared to see a common and ordinarily well-behaved dory go gallivanting over the waves in such a crazy manner, describing curves and careens that caused its inmates to hold hard to the gunwales.

"Hurrah!" yelled the boys, in excitement and exhilaration. But the men were somewhat anxious, for the dory lay low with its heavy load, and the foam and spray flew over the bow ever and anon, giving the crew a thorough wetting.

"Keep a good hold, boys; if the line parts you might be pitched overboard. And get into the stern as far as you can or we 'll plough under."

Skipper Nickerson had an oar out over the stern, keeping the boat as steady as he could, while Uncle Ned had an open knife handy, in case it should become necessary to cut the line.

"What in the world are we hitched to, Uncle Ned?" asked Alan. "A whale?"

"Not quite," replied the woodsman. "It's a tuna, and an all-fired big one. The people round here call it a horse-mackerel. I bet it'll go six hundred!"

"Nine hundred, sir, and likely more!" sang out the skipper. "You'll never get him alongside with that line!"

"Maybe not, maybe not, skipper. Hullo, where's he headed now?" The fish had turned and was apparently shaping its course directly for the long line of herring-net floats. "Lord, that won't do! Hope he'll turn off before he drags us over those nets. We'll tear 'em to pieces and those chaps'll murder us!"

But onward rushed the fish, causing the foam to boil round the dory's bow, and one or two respectable seas to be shipped. Uncle Ned was almost on the point of cutting the line, and the fishermen were standing up in

their boats and frantically waving the dory off, when in the nick of time the tuna sheered off to the eastward. Uncle Ned had taken a hitch round the forward seat, and there was simply nothing to do but wait for the big fish to tire.

"Wonder when it 'll be," he mused, after an hour of the same fast pace. "That feller up at Mira Gut said he was fast to one for thirteen hours! Next time I go minnow-fishin' I 'll take a canal-boat and a hawser!"

"What put it into your head to try to catch a tuna this way?" asked Jack.

"Well, they do it out in California, but I guess the fish don't run so big out there. Hullo, what 's that, slack line? Reel up there when I loose this hitch — quick!"

Jack reeled in fifty yards or more that Uncle Ned gathered in while the fish was evidently swimming towards the boat, and the line was again made fast when it showed signs of tightening up once more.

Several times the tuna jumped half out of the water, and twice he bored down deep into the sea, so that they had to give him line to avoid being dragged under. However, the heavy line and the weight of the big dory began at last to tell, even on such a monster as they were fast to, and gradually Uncle Ned, assisted by the two boys, got the tuna alongside.

"My, what a whopper!" exclaimed Alan, as the ten-foot fish sulkily came in.

"Look out for squalls!" shouted Uncle Ned, raising a big rifle that had already excited the boys' curiosity.

As the shot struck the fish, it had a very opposite effect from that which was expected, for the tuna gave a great lurch and disappeared once more, tearing the line off the reel as at the first. Once more the fight was on and the renewal came so suddenly that the line partially jammed, causing the boat to be jerked forward and the two boys

to be thrown violently on their "beam-ends" in a jiffy. However, nobody was hurt, and the shot evidently did its work, for the fish slowed up gradually and then seemed to float motionless on the surface. Hauling in hand over hand, they soon had it once more alongside, quite "all in," as Alan said.

"Here, let me slip this bowline over his tail," continued Alan, anxious to show some of his nautical knowledge to Jack, whose superior woodsmanship had often aroused his envy.

"Better have a care, young gentleman," cautioned the old fisherman.

But Alan, with a "Pshaw! He 's dead as a door-nail!" leaned over the rail, and was about to pass the noose over the monster's tail, when, like lightning, this mighty appendage flew up and, catching the rash youth bang on the side of the head, knocked him into the bottom of the boat as if he had been struck with a trip-hammer. The men were

a little anxious, but the lad recovered his senses almost immediately, while the brutal Jack made no attempt to suppress his roars of unholy glee. Before the big fish could indulge in any more antics, Uncle Ned gave him another shot through the brain, and in a few minutes they were towing their quarry back to the pier in triumph. The fight had lasted over three hours.

"By George," said Uncle Ned, "I 'd like to get a chap like that on tuna-tackle, and I 'm goin' to before the summer 's out."

"What are they good for?" asked Jack.

"Well, not much since fish-oil got so cheap. They make a great fertilizer, and a good many are sent to New York, where the Italian colony is fond of 'em. You know the tuna, or tunny-fish, is common in the Mediterranean Sea, and you may see it being sliced up and sold, as we do halibut, in the fish-markets of Messina, Palermo, and other big ports. But they say the meat of our fish is not so good

as theirs, and in fact some say that our fish are mostly albacore, and not the real tuna, though some of these do happen along. It must be great fun to get hold of a fellow like this one with rod and reel, though you see there 's enough excitement with even a hand-line or a harpoon."

At the pier the gigantic fish aroused great enthusiasm. An army of photographers snapped the tuna, and it was strung up, measured, and weighed. Uncle Ned was a little disappointed with the results of this operation, for the fish weighed only a little over eight hundred pounds and measured nine and one half feet, which was not a record, though nobody on the pier could remember a larger one being taken with a hand-line and hook.

After a good lunch, Uncle Ned proposed another little nautical expedition, as it was too late to start on their long drive back into the country, and it is needless to say that the

boys hailed the idea with joy. This time the sport was shorter, but hardly less exciting. It seemed that Mr. Nickerson had seen an ominous fin cutting the water in the neighborhood of the herring-nets, and the big junk of meat that was now fastened on the big hook was destined for the owner of that big fin. Arriving at a buoy not far from the nets, they had not long to wait before the sharp-eyed sailor spied the fin slowly approaching. He warned Uncle Ned, who was able to throw the big piece of meat right in front of the shark, for shark it was, and a tremendous one too. Like a flash, it was snapped up and swallowed.

"Look out now!" exclaimed Uncle Ned. "There 'll be ructions directly! Jes' let him feel that hook!"

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when a powerful jerk on the line was followed by half a dozen more still harder, and then the line began to run out like mad.

Uncle Ned had big leather mitts on, and the boys got hold of the line and helped, so that a hitch was soon taken in the stout line, and another towing match began. But the shark, big as it was, had not the great strength of the tuna, and inch by inch it was hauled up to the boat by the combined strength of the three. As it came near the boat, lashing the water into foam, Mr. Nickerson took Uncle Ned's place on the line, and the woodsman shot it four times through the head with the big rifle, which ended its struggles. Once more they returned in triumph to the shore, where they hauled up and photographed their quarry. It measured over seven feet in length. Near by, another party of fishermen were weighing two enormous sunfish which they had captured in the neighborhood.

Thus ended Uncle Ned's "surprise-party," which the boys voted a big success, being something for which their summer's programme did not call.

CALLING THE BIG BULL-MOOSE

CHAPTER XIII

CALLING THE BIG BULL-MOOSE

OFTEN during the late summer Uncle Ned observed the boys' gaze riveted on the great moose-head that proudly dominated the living-room of Camp Buckshaw from its place over the mantelpiece, and more than once the question, "You won't forget that moose-hunt, will you, Uncle Ned?" caused the old woodsman to smile.

"We 'll see, boys, we 'll see. Time will tell. I was n't really plannin' on killin' another bull, unless he had a much bigger spread of antlers than that feller, and those kind ain't so all-fired plenty."

The boys looked aghast.

"Uncle Ned," exclaimed Alan. "You surely would n't go back on your word, would you?"

"No, I could n't do that, could I, boys, after makin' your mouths water all summer? Maybe we could shoot him without hurtin' him, if he wa'n't bigger 'n this one."

"What, hit him and not kill him?"

"Sure! Hit him all over!"

The lads looked bewildered, but they knew their friend's gentle heart, when it came to the subject of animals, and they suspected his meaning.

"Of course shootin' a bull-moose is great sport, but ain't it just as good an' better to do a perfect job o' huntin' and get your bull where you want him, and then say to him, after you 've pulled the trigger of your camera on him, 'There, now trot along, sonny, and grow a bigger pair next year'?"

"Yes," said Jack dubiously, "but you could n't say 'I killed a moose.'"

"No, Jack, you could n't; but the sooner you get over that old savage pride in killin' things, the better for you, not to speak of the

beasts," answered Uncle Ned severely. "And in my humble opinion it takes more courage to face a wild beast with a camera than with a repeatin' rifle, where in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it has n't the ghost of a chance to get at the hunter, and precious little for its life. They have some kind of a club down in New York to which they say a feller can't belong unless he 's killed some kind o' big game, but I think they ought to amend their by-laws and admit every man who 's got a photograph taken by himself to show that he could have killed his bull or his bear if he 'd only wanted to. I ain't much on sentiment, and my hands are red enough, too red, I 'm sorry to say, with the blood of the forest creatures, but I want you boys to have the advantage o' my experience and be better sportsmen than I was at your age, and that means do as little killin' as you can. You 'll find that you won't have to do much to have just as good a time, as if you murdered a

thousand pair o' partridges or pheasants in a day or two, as they say the noble lords an' dooks do in Europe. Fine sportsmen they must be!"

And Uncle Ned's lips curled in a fine scorn.

"There ain't any two ways about it, boys," he went on. "We fellers who kill, unless it 's really for food or raiment, have n't a whole lot to say for ourselves, for we ain't fightin' really fair, and we shan't until we teach the wild beasts that we hunt to use a Winchester rifle as well as we do! And for that reason, if people tell you still-huntin', that is, creepin' up on a beast, is fairer than outwittin' it by callin', say, you just tell 'em to climb down off their perch! One 's as fair, or rather as unfair as t' other, and the only thing we can do is to kill as little as possible, and just confess we 're brutes, for that 's what we are! An' now come ahead, get your cameras ready,

for it 's the openin' o' the moose-huntin' season day after to-morrer, an' I 'm goin' to keep to my word !"

Great was the joy of Jack and Alan, and even the girls were caught by the excitement of the preparations. Nell wanted to go with the "men-folks," but Mr. Buckshaw was of the opinion that the trip might be too hard for her, and a girl in the party would hamper their movements, which caused some pouting on the young lady's part.

Many were the questions that the old guide had to answer about moose and their habits.

"Yes, it 's callin' time now. You see moose mate in September and part of October, and the lady moose ain't a bit backward about lettin' the gentlemen moose know they 'll be welcome. They 're just like some girls I 've heard tell of. The cow-moose calls loud and long, and, like those

girls again, she ain't very particular what bull hears the call and comes, so long's it's a bull. But one thing I will say for moose, they only take up with one girl or feller at a time. They say, like that poem, —

> 'You can't give your heart to somebody else
> An' still hold hands with me!'

Good thing if some young folks would keep to that as well as moose do!" said Uncle Ned, with a sly glance at Vic.

"And are you going to call a moose and photograph him?" asked Madge.

"That's the idea, Madge. I'm goin' to imitate the cow's call, and see whether a bull will come up and pose for us."

And so at last they started on their two days' journey, by lake and carry, to the bog in the neighborhood of which Uncle Ned knew a big bull was at home.

Already were come the cold, clear days of the gorgeous American autumn, when the rocks are white along the shore and the

breeze paints the lake bluer than the blue sky above; when every maple and oak is a flaming torch and the fields are yellow with goldenrod. The nights were cold, the mornings even frosty, while floods of golden sunshine tempered the air of noon to the balminess of summer.

Once the noisy parting at the float was over, all three of our huntsmen were content to paddle silently down the calm lake, so wonderfully beautiful was the coloring of the trees and rocks and water. It was not until they were in Pike's Run, at the entrance to the next lake, that a word was spoken; but now Uncle Ned suddenly stopped the canoe, and called the boys' attention to a big horned owl that sat on the top of a tall stump a few yards from the shore.

"Here would be a good chance to do a little stalkin'," he said in a low voice. "Here, Jack, you 've got your camera ready. I 'll land you over there behind that clump o'

maples, and you see if you can get a good snap of him. Alan, you take your twenty-two and keep him covered. Shoot him if he starts to fly, or after Jack has snapped him if he don't fly. Now then, it 's up to you boys to show your paces!"

Like cats the two lads stepped ashore from the canoe, and each adjusted his weapon, Jack his kodak and Alan his little repeating-rifle. The latter placed himself behind a tree, through the low leafy branches of which he had a good view of the owl, upon which he drew a fine bead, and then awaited the events that were to come. Alan's task was much harder, for it was necessary to get within twenty or thirty feet of the great bird without being discovered, and that, on such a calm day, seemed well-nigh impossible. However, Jack did it. As good fortune would have it, there was a high rock within a few paces of the owl, and the boy succeeded in creeping up on his hands and knees to its base without

alarming his owlship. Then, carefully setting the camera at the right focus, he crept up the easy incline of the big rock, raised himself above it on hands and knees, and got a fine shot at old Mr. Bubo before the latter had time even to think of escaping. It was well done on Jack's part. But Alan, too, was not asleep, and as soon as he heard the click of the camera, the little rifle cracked, and the big owl, bounding into the air, poised itself uncertainly for a second, and then fell heavily to the ground.

"Well, I swan!" remarked the admiring Uncle Ned, as the quarry was brought in, and he was assured that the snapshot was probably as good as the one of lead. "That's great! You certainly are a pair o' promisin' youngsters, an' I 'm proud of ye! My, what a whopper! Look o' those claws! Do you wonder they call him the 'tiger o' the north woods'? They 'll kill a fox or a lamb quicker 'n scat, an' I saw one make a swoop

at Yank the other day, consarn his hide! I told you the other day I was n't much on killin' lately, but you just shoot every big owl you see. They rob us of thousands of partridges and rabbits every year, and Heaven knows how many beautiful song-birds. Funny that chap did n't seem to see us. They can see perfectly well by daylight or dark either, and as a rule are very shy. I saw a case over at Georges Lake once when we were fishing at the pool near the carry, that you won't believe, but Graham Nobbes an' Hod Munro were along and can vouch for the truth of it. Hod was fishin' and had hooked a big one, p'raps a pound or so, when a big owl that we 'd seen sittin' on a limb across the pool began to rubber an' then fly out towards us. We thought that was kind o' funny, but I thought Hod would sure tip the canoe over when that bird suddenly flew out, made a dash into the water for that trout an' carried it clean off! The leader broke o' course, an'

someway or other the owl dropped the trout an' then circled round an' settled on the limb again. Well, sir, we tried to get another trout, but the scrap had scared 'em off, so I put on a dead one and trailed it up an' down in the water, an' I 'll be jiggered if that owl did n't come again, and grabbed the fish just as I had it right opposite Hod, an' he gave it a whack with the paddle, broke its wing and stunned it, an' the next moment we had it in the canoe. An' that ain't no fish-story neither!"

The boys believed, for they knew Uncle Ned did not belong to that class of guides who enjoy telling "whoppers" to amuse and mystify their employers.

"You said you saw one swoop at Yankee, Uncle Ned," said Alan. "Can an owl kill a cat?"

"Can a cat kill a mouse?" replied the guide, with a chuckle. "You bet it can! You 've heard me tell of Johnny McEwan,

the Indian hunter and taxidermist over at Bear River? Well, he 's got a horned owl now, and he says if a cat comes within reach, it 's just one-two and tabby 's out of it for keeps. One grip of that claw on the back of her neck, that 's all."

"This is n't the fellow that goes 'whoo-hoo-hoo-whoo-ah!' is it?"

"No, that 's the barred owl, an' it 's funny we almost never see one, though we hear 'em more than the big ones. This one goes, 'Whoo, hoo-hoo! Whoo, whoo!' All the cries of beasts and birds vary, anyway."

They were nearing their camping-place now, and their thoughts naturally turned again to the chase. Jack wanted to know why Uncle Ned had n't preferred to take them on a still-hunt instead of a calling-hunt.

"I like 'em both," replied the guide, "but you see in still-huntin' you would n't have

one chance in a hundred to get a snapshot with a camera."

"Who 's the best still-hunter you ever knew, Uncle Ned?"

"Gracious, I do' know! That 's a hard question. I guess if what they tell about old Mattio Jeremy, the Indian, is true, he was about the best ever. He was out huntin' with his uncle when he was a young man, and they came to a swamp where they knew there was moose lyin', and his uncle, who was trainin' him, stumped him to crawl in on the moose. I've heard Mattio tell about it lots o' times. He said, 'I go down in that swamp, an' I kneel down, an' I creep, an' I creep, an' I creep. Pretty quick I see big ear flop roun'. I keep down. Then I creep again, but always keep still when I see big ear flop. Then I creep right on my belly, slow, slow till I get where I reach out my hand an' slap that bull on rump, an' I call out, *Chiglahsy!* That mean, Git out o' here! My! How he git up an'

run!' Mattio would act it all out when he told it. I guess that would take first prize, would n't it?"

The boys could but marvel.

"I 'd rather believe the owl story," said Alan.

"I do' know," said Jack. "I know old Mattio, an' he 's a fine old fellow. I don't believe he would lie."

"No, but perhaps he 's told it so often to amuse people that he believes it himself now."

"Here 's the carry, boys," interrupted Uncle Ned. "Now we 're right in the moose country, and it 's going to be still to-night, I guess, so we won't make any more noise than we have to. We 'll leave the canoe here, and tote our blankets an' grub over to a shack 'bout halfway over to Sundown Lake, where I 'm goin' to call to-morrow morning."

It was already dusk, so that no time was

lost in getting to camp, where a supply of dry hardwood was kept, in order that a fire without smoke could be made in the old stove. Uncle Ned made himself a bed out of his blankets and a few evergreen boughs, while the boys had their fine "Comfort Pockets," or rubber air-beds. After a good supper there was a game of pedro, with the accompaniment of Uncle Ned's pipe, and at half-past eight o'clock all hands turned in.

It seemed to the boys but a few minutes later when they felt a hand on their shoulders. A candle flickered on the rude table, and it was bitter cold, but already the coffee-pot was singing over a tiny fire in the stove.

"Five o'clock, boys!" said Uncle Ned. "Hustle an' get all your warm stuff on, for we've got half a mile to go to the bog."

"Goin' to be a good morning for calling?" asked Alan anxiously.

"Dandy!" answered the guide, and the boys' hearts jumped for joy. Dressing them-

selves quickly, they each swallowed a cup of hot coffee with a piece of bread dipped in it, slung their cameras over their shoulders, and followed Uncle Ned down the trail. The guide alone carried a rifle, as well as an axe and his birch-bark moose-call. It was pitch-dark at first, and Uncle Ned went on ahead with a lighted candle; but presently it lightened sufficiently for them to see where they were going, without its aid, and they arrived at their destination, — a high rock beside a bog some two hundred yards long by a hundred wide, with a small dead-water stream skirting its farther side. At the end of the bog, where the calling rock was, it narrowed, so that the stream was not over fifty yards from the hunters. The boys seated themselves as comfortably as they could on the bank of moss at the foot of the rock, while Uncle Ned mounted it and stood for some minutes listening silently.

Not a breath of air was stirring, and so ab-

solutely calm it was that the fall of a maple-leaf made a noise like the footfall of an animal. A white frost was over all, and a thin fog hung over the bog, thickening toward the brook. After a few minutes the guide got down from the rock, and, standing with his back to the thick woods, placed the horn to his mouth and gave the first call, — not very loud, for there might be a bull near by. How wild, uncanny, and even ridiculous it sounded to the boys, this long-drawn-out braying, "Oo-oo-wa-aa-ach!" that went echoing across the still bog and up through the maple and hemlock hills like a trumpet. And how absolute, even oppressive the silence that followed it. All three remained as still as statues, their watches and their heart-beats counting themselves out so loud that it seemed they would frighten all the game within a mile. A sparrow flew out of the hardhacks with a noise that startled the boys into an involuntary exclamation, which drew

a look of disapproval from Uncle Ned, accompanied by a shake of the head. After a couple of minutes he remounted the rock, and five minutes later called again. Then began twenty minutes of shivering and listening before Uncle Ned for the third time slowly raised the horn to his lips, after carefully clearing his throat, and repeated the yearning, sonorous call, imitating the low of the cow-moose. Again the boys forced themselves into rigidity, and listened — listened — listened, while the bright spot on the eastern horizon grew gradually into a disc of molten gold, from which yellow shafts of light shot out through the thick white mist.

A barred owl screamed in the distance, and a big trout jumped from the brook across the bog and fell back into the water with a resounding splash. A couple of porcupines whined in the hemlocks, a blue jay flew chattering over their heads, and a wandering hornet whizzed past them with a

boom that, for an instant, the boys thought surely must be the answer of a bull-moose. Nature was waking up, and still there was no response.

Again the call, directed as before toward the swamps on the opposite side of the stream. A moment later the boys noticed a certain rigid eagerness in Ned's attitude.

"He hears something," whispered Jack.

But what was that? Away off on the ridge over the stream there was a peculiar sound, so imperceptible that the boys were not sure that they heard it. It was like the far-off explosion of a rocket, or the barking of a dog heard miles away. Uncle Ned turned to the boys with a gesture in the direction of the noise.

"That's him!" he whispered. "He's comin'! Get your cameras ready and don't move till I tell you!"

The moose was coming! The boys' hearts pounded like hammers, and their

fingers trembled with excitement as well as with cold, as they got their cameras ready for the supreme test. Uncle Ned slipped a cartridge into his Winchester, and laid it on the rock beside him. Now the boys listened and heard the bull easily. That last hoarse "Wah!" must be pretty near, right in the spruces over there. Uncle Ned slipped down off the rock.

"Now, boys, see that little rise in the bog right there, twenty yards from here? Well, you slip over to that and lie down, so you can just see through the hardhacks. Don't waste your plates. If he looks as if he would n't cross the brook, I 'll whistle and you snap him; but I guess he 'll come over. He sounds kind o' eager now, don't he? Sh! Now quick, and then lie still, for he ain't over three hundred yards off!"

The boys obeyed, and were soon on their knees on the little knoll, with their Graflexes in their hands. Uncle Ned gave one more

THE BIG BULL-MOOSE

call, a low, appealing whine; and hark! across the brook the trees shook and rustled and the dry underbrush cracked. Another second, and the great black bull parted the limbs with his gigantic antlers and stepped out on the bog. What a bulk! What a height! How clean and yellow his antlers! A second he stood motionless, scanning the opposite woods, and then came forward with head down, smelling for the scent of his mate. He did not hesitate, but, as Uncle Ned hoped, plunged into the stream and soon appeared on the side of the hunters. Without stopping to shake the water from his flanks, the big bull advanced steadily, until, as the boys said afterwards, they were afraid he would walk over them. Then they rose to a standing position, aimed their cameras carefully at the magnificent animal, and "Click! Click!" he was their moose!

Rearing up, the bull turned once more towards the brook, and was off along it for

a hundred yards like a whirlwind. Then he crossed the brook and plunged into the forest, and was gone.

"Did you get a good shot?" sang out Uncle Ned from his rock.

The boys answered with whoops of delight and excitement, but exactly what they said was hard to make out. At last they calmed down and asked the guide why he had n't "downed him."

"Was n't he big enough?" queried Alan. "My heaven, I thought he was an elephant!"

"Well, he sure was a big bull," said the old guide, "but I kind o' thought he 'd do us more good in the woods than cut up for tough steak. Ten years ago I 'd 'a' shot him, sure enough! We 'll pick up a couple o' partridges for dinner. They 're tenderer!"

THE SNOW BEGINS TO FLY

CHAPTER XIV

THE SNOW BEGINS TO FLY

THE fifteenth day of November was dull and cold on the Milford Lakes. There was an ominous stillness in the heavy air, broken occasionally by a short-lived flurry of wind. The gorgeous autumn color seemed to have faded out of the landscape. The hardhacks that had ringed Huckleberry Island with a wreath of crimson were now brown and sere. The fiery leaves of the oaks and maples and sumacs were mostly lying dead on the ground, except a few that still fluttered mournfully from the bare limbs. Uncle Ned stood on his veranda, scanning the light sheet of snow that already covered the ground. With the old trapper's instinct he was looking for tracks, but not

those of wild beasts just now. He was hoping to see the footprints of a cat, his beloved Yankee, who had not been seen for a fortnight. The summer hotel in the village had long since closed and all the guests departed; his pets were all gone, even the hounds; and now the one friend that had ever been faithful — where was she? Uncle Ned tried hard to banish from his heart the answer to this question, but he felt it, he knew it, only too well. Yank would never come back to him; something had happened to her. The old guide sauntered down to the canoe-landing and gazed with a heavy heart across the lake at the dark tree-tops beyond. The far-off hoot of an owl caused his brow to knit and his teeth to clench. Instinctively he drew one hand from his pocket, closed it, and shook it savagely toward the haunt of the blood-thirsty bird.

"Who yer goin' to lick now?" sung out a voice behind him.

YANKEE

It was Reuben, who had come to the cabin to borrow an axe. Ned started guiltily, having the true New England sense of shame at being caught in the expression of any emotion.

"I was jus' tellin' that cussed owl what I'd do to him for killin' Yank," he replied, with an effort to put humor into his voice.

"Well, I'll be licked if you ain't goin' on about that animile yet, an' it 's only a cat! Say, can I have this axe o' yourn for an hour? Thank ye! So long!" And Reuben strolled off.

Uncle Ned Buckshaw stood for a long time gazing silently across the lake, with his hands in his pockets, while the snow-flakes fell faster and thicker. Somehow his heart seemed very heavy.

"Only a cat!" he murmured to himself. "Only a cat!"

Slowly he turned and walked up the

path to the cabin, and as he did so something glistened for an instant upon his weather-beaten cheek, then broke and disappeared in the hair of his grizzled beard.

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

A SELECTED LIST OF OUT OF DOOR AND NATURE BOOKS

BY JOHN BURROUGHS

WAYS OF NATURE
FAR AND NEAR
Each of the above, 16mo, gilt top, $1.10, *net*. Postpaid, $1.20.
WAKE-ROBIN
WINTER SUNSHINE
PEPACTON, AND OTHER SKETCHES
FRESH FIELDS
SIGNS AND SEASONS
BIRDS AND POETS, WITH OTHER PAPERS
LOCUSTS AND WILD HONEY
RIVERBY
Each of the above, 16mo, gilt top, $1.25.
A YEAR IN THE FIELDS
Selections appropriate to each season of the year from the writings of JOHN BURROUGHS. With a Biographical Sketch, and 24 Illustrations from Photographs by CLIFTON JOHNSON. 12mo, gilt top, $1.50.
SQUIRRELS AND OTHER FUR-BEARERS
Illustrated in color after AUDUBON. Square 12mo, $1.00.

BY HENRY D. THOREAU

A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS. With Portrait.
WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS
THE MAINE WOODS
CAPE COD

EARLY SPRING IN MASSACHUSETTS
SUMMER. With Map of Concord.
AUTUMN
WINTER
The above four are from the journal of THOREAU. Edited by H. G. O. BLAKE.
EXCURSIONS
MISCELLANIES
With Biographical Sketch by RALPH WALDO EMERSON, Portrait, and General Index to the Writings of THOREAU.
Each of the above, crown 8vo, gilt top, $1.50.

A SELECTED LIST OF OUT OF DOOR AND NATURE BOOKS

BY JOHN MUIR

OUR NATIONAL PARKS
With Illustrations from Photographs. Crown 8vo, gilt top, $1.75, *net*. Postpaid, $1.92.

BY OLIVE THORNE MILLER

WITH THE BIRDS IN MAINE
16mo, $1.10, *net*. Postpaid, $1.20.

THE FIRST BOOK OF BIRDS
With colored Illustrations. Square 12mo, $1.00.

THE SECOND BOOK OF BIRDS: BIRD FAMILIES
With colored Illustrations by LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES. Square 12mo, $1.00, *net*. Postpaid, $1.10.

TRUE BIRD STORIES FROM MY NOTE-BOOKS
With Illustrations by LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES. 12mo, $1.00, *net*. Postpaid, $1.08.

UPON THE TREE-TOPS. With illustrations by J. CARTER BEARD.
A BIRD-LOVER IN THE WEST
LITTLE BROTHERS OF THE AIR
IN NESTING TIME
BIRD-WAYS
Each of the above, 16mo, $1.25.

BY BRADFORD TORREY

NATURE'S INVITATION
THE CLERK OF THE WOODS
FOOTING IT IN FRANCONIA
Each of the above, 16mo, $1.10, *net*. Postpaid, $1.20.

SPRING NOTES FROM TENNESSEE
A FLORIDA SKETCH-BOOK
THE FOOT-PATH WAY
A WORLD OF GREEN HILLS
BIRDS IN THE BUSH
A RAMBLER'S LEASE
Each of the above, 16mo, $1.25.

EVERYDAY BIRDS
With colored Illustrations reproduced from AUDUBON. Square 12mo, $1.00.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 08816 047 6